

**A PRESS RELEASE FROM  
THE INTERNATIONAL LEARNING CENTER**

A program of



## **International Learning Center Partners in Big Initiatives**

### **Playground, Community Garden, Global Mural Projects Link Refugee Students with Greater Milwaukee Community**

**DATE:** August 26, 2011 - ongoing

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Milwaukee, WI - Three new projects link International Learning Center's refugee students with the greater Milwaukee community in this summer of good news:

- A playground for ILC preschool students is now installed and in full swing thanks to fundraising from the community. Engineers from **Rockwell Automation** and **Neighborhood House teens** volunteered to level the land, put up a fence and secure the equipment. This contribution is not only for ILC kids; **neighborhood children** near 25th & Wisconsin enjoy the swings every day.
- ILC students and staff are planting seeds, pulling weeds, and harvesting vegetables in the **Urban Eden** community garden just west of the new ILC playground. Urban Eden is a joint project with two multicultural neighborhood churches - **Central United Methodist** and **St. Paul's Lutheran** together with **Marquette Students for an Environmentally Active Campus (SEAC)** and **25th Street neighbors**.
- ILC students and staff took part in the **Urban Eden INSIDE OUT mural**, a global art project, bringing faces of staff and students to the garden wall. **INSIDE OUT** is an international participatory art project that transforms messages of personal identity into murals around the world. The mural is located behind the United Methodist Church in which the ILC is located. ILC instructor Sally Kuzma coordinated the mural project with photographer John Ruebartsch, an ILC volunteer.

(continued on page 2)



### **WEB LINKS**

International Learning Center photos, student stories and more at [ilcmilwaukee.wordpress.com](http://ilcmilwaukee.wordpress.com)

A review of the mural with more photos at [artswithoutborders-eddee.blogspot.com](http://artswithoutborders-eddee.blogspot.com)

INSIDE OUT project website: [www.insideoutproject.net](http://www.insideoutproject.net)

Neighborhood House of Milwaukee: [nh-milw.org](http://nh-milw.org)

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### **ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL LEARNING CENTER**

The ILC is Wisconsin's leading center for refugees. It directly serves 600 refugees annually from 25 countries in Africa, Asia and the Middle East, and indirectly serves another 2,500 family members, mostly children. Located at 639 North 25th Street, the agency provides programs in literacy, citizenship, numeracy, daily living skills, pre-GED, parenting classes, and employment and job training, as well as medical and trauma referrals. It also has a licensed childcare program. The ILC is one of only three citizenship programs in Milwaukee to be accredited by the U.S. Board of Immigration Appeals. The ILC won the First Lady Jessica Doyle Award in 2010 for Excellence in Family Literacy and was one of only several recipients in the nation to receive the 2008 Ray Solem Award for immigration services.

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## PAGE 2 - INTERNATIONAL LEARNING CENTER LEADS BIG INITIATIVES

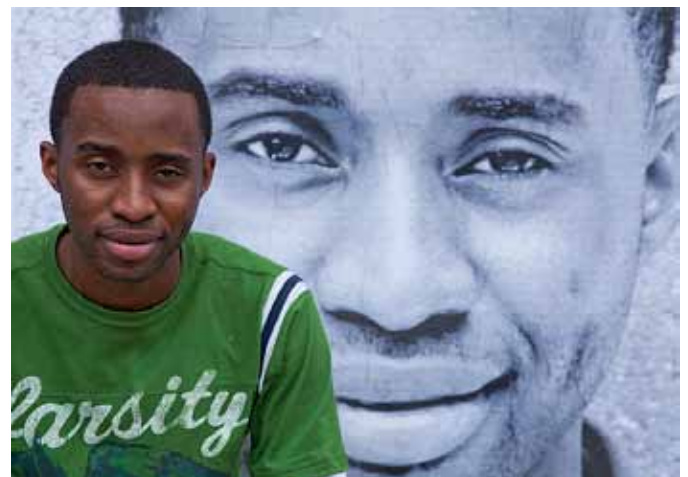
**PLAYGROUND:** Engineers from **Rockwell Automation** and **Neighborhood House teens** volunteered to level the land, put up a fence and secure the equipment for **International Learning Center's** new playground. The playground is open to preschool children of the refugee families ILC serves as well as **children from the surrounding neighborhood.**



**GARDEN:** **International Learning Center student** and **Urban Eden gardener** Cin Muan Thang, a recent refugee from Burma, contributed this story to the **Urban Eden INSIDE OUT mural project online archive:**

*On July 15, 1990, my parents brought me to the world. I have seven siblings, I am the only son. My life was harder than how I expected. I wasn't educated well. I was drawn out of school when I was in 4th grade because of the lack of financial aid. My family wasn't able to support me to continue my education. It's happen to the life of most of third-world nations' citizens. I spend most of my teen life to seek money to support my family. By the blessing of God I got a chance to go to Malaysia when I reached age of 16 years old, but illegally. There I started thinking about my future. Because of the political struggle between the government and the ethnic groups, I wasn't able to go back to my family. There I received the great blessing from God from being hopeless. He opened the golden door that allowed me to step in. I got a contact with UNHCR and that brought me to the golden land named United States of America. I believe that my life in this land, my future will be shine as a star.*

[www.insideoutproject.net/#/sp/dUdByU](http://www.insideoutproject.net/#/sp/dUdByU)



**MURAL:** ILC student and staff together with members of two multicultural neighborhood churches - **Central United Methodist** and **St. Paul's Lutheran** - worked with **Marquette Students for an Environmentally Active Campus (SEAC)** and **25th Street neighbors** to install the **Urban Eden INSIDE OUT mural**. The mural is located near 26th & Wisconsin Ave., behind the United Methodist Church in which the ILC is located. Milwaukee photographer and **ILC volunteer John Ruebartsch** shot the mural portraits including that of **International Learning Center student Abdinajib Shongolo**, right. **ILC instructor Sally Kuzma** coordinated the mural project. Mural installation photos above by Eddee Daniel.