Learning America: Burmese in Immigrant Literacy Program at IPFW

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Recommended Citation

Kyaw Soe (2010). Learning America: Burmese in Immigrant Literacy Program at IPFW.
http://opus.ipfw.edu/stu_symp2010/39
This study is about the Burmese community in Fort Wayne, Indiana and the Immigrant Literacy Program.

Fort Wayne, Indiana is the home to the largest Burmese population outside of Burma. The Burmese community in Fort Wayne is the result of a pro-democracy uprising in 1988 and the subsequent brutal crackdown of the population by the military regime. Leaders of the pro-democracy movement and even ordinary citizens became targets of government persecution. Further, following this social chaos, human rights violations and mismanagement of resources by the military regime caused massive refugees. Many of these former refugees are settled in the U. S., and Fort Wayne became the hub of the Brumes immigrant population.

As new members of America, the Brumes population is faced with challenges of adapting to new culture and language and most significantly, education of children in a new environment. To address these challenges, a Burmese community leader, with support from School of Education faculty, at IPFW, the Immigrant Literacy Program was established in 2005.

This study explores the effectiveness of the Immigrant Literacy Program and considers for future direction (181).