**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**   
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**MEDIA CONTACT**   
Claire Van Fossen,   
Director of Development  
414.933.6161 ext 127cvanfossen@nh-milw.org

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Neighborhood House Welcomes Refugee Youth Group**

*Tutoring Project Gets Classroom Space, Recreation and Social Opportunities*

**Milwaukee, Jan. 14, 2015** --- **Neighborhood House of Milwaukee**, a community center in the settlement house tradition now in its 70th year, is launching a partnership with **Burmese Immersion Project**, a refugee service provider focusing on school-age youth. The partnership extends Neighborhood House’s involvement with refugee communities by providing classroom space for tutoring, facilities for athletics and recreational activities, and opportunities for social integration.

**Burmese Immersion Project** was founded by Milwaukee natives **Robert Heffernan** and **Rebecca Schultz** in 2011 in response to the needs of refugee families whose children were struggling in school. Over 1000 Burmese refugees have been relocated in Milwaukee after fleeing civil war and human rights abuses in their native country; many have spent decades with scarce access to food, safe shelter, and basic education. As a result, their children need support meeting new academic challenges, adjusting to a new culture, and learning the English language. What started as a volunteer tutoring program now serves over fifty students a month, and has proudly graduated its first salutatorian. BIP also helps high school students transition to college through a partnership with **UWM** that provides tutoring for highly motivated youth grade 6 and over who have shown a commitment to higher education.

“*This new partnership expands on work we’ve been doing at our International Learning Center since the 1980s, addressing the specific needs of newcomers through adult ESL, job readiness, and family literacy initiatives that empower parents to be their child’s first teacher,*” said Neighborhood House’s Executive Director Jeff Martinka. “*We welcome the Burmese Immersion Project*, *and look forward to seeing these kids participate in other Neighborhood House after-school and recreational activities.”*

LINKS   
[Burmese Immersion Project](https://bippaw.wordpress.com/) web site: <https://bippaw.wordpress.com>   
Facebook: [https://www.facebook.com/**BurmeseImmersionProject**](https://www.facebook.com/BurmeseImmersionProject)  
Press: http://www.radiomilwaukee.org/stories/education-youth/burmese-immersion-project-helps-refugee-students

NOTE: Neighborhood House International Learning Center was featured in a **Radio 88.9 story**, posted on their web site, radiomilwaukee.org.

***Please direct any media inquiries regarding this announcement to Claire Van Fossen at (414) 933-6161 ext 127.***

**ABOUT NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE:***Neighborhood House of Milwaukee was founded in 1945 to help strengthen children and families in some of the city’s most under-served neighborhoods. The agency has touched the lives of nearly a million children and adults in the last 70 years. Its highly regarded, award-winning programs serve infants & toddlers, school-age and teen youth, adults and families, refugees and immigrants. More at* [***www.nh-milw.org***](http://www.nh-milw.org)