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Celebrating the Quest for Refuge Through the Power of Story

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Celebrating the Quest for Refuge Through the Power of Story

Students produce film and written stories of local community members who have fled their native lands and now call Rhode Island home

Community members who fled their native lands for political, economic and other reasons discuss why it was so powerful for them to share their stories on film in the Community Story Project.

January 9, 2017  |  Justin Wilder

BRISTOL, R.I. – Seemingly every day there are news reports of refugees fleeing countries around the world as a result of war, lack of food and water, or corrupt governments. The numbers can be overwhelming – hundreds, or perhaps thousands a day – and it is easy to forget that these are individual people with unique stories.

After their experience last fall, students in Professor Dahliani Reynold’s Multimodal Writing course will never just see those numbers as faceless. In a semester-long fall project, teams of students collaborated with local community organizations to interview immigrants and refugees who now call Rhode Island home and produce their stories as short films and written narratives hosted on websites they created. The project tested their skills as writers, videographers and story-tellers and forever changed the way they saw the refugee crisis.

At the end of the semester, students and the community partners they featured, gathered to celebrate their powerful stories told in student-produced multimedia narratives as part of the University’s “Quest for Refuge” series. The multimedia gallery exhibition reflected critically on the
current state of refugees around the world and celebrated their stories of tragedy and loss as well as courage and resilience.

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