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*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

## **KENTUCKY REFUGEE MINISTRIES CELEBRATES 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY**

**Saturday, June 12, 2010  
6:00 – 9:00 pm  
Kentucky Refugee Ministries**

LOUISVILLE, KY, June 1, 2010 — Kentucky Refugee Ministries (KRM) will celebrate its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary with an international dinner and awards ceremony to honor the community supporters who have partnered with KRM to help over 7,800 refugees rebuild their lives in Kentucky.

KRM was founded as a nonprofit agency in 1990 by Donna Craig as an outreach of the Presbyterian Church (USA) denomination. Initially working as a volunteer out of her kitchen, Ms. Craig expanded the agency and secured its affiliation with Church World Service and Episcopal Migration Ministries. In 1995 KRM became authorized to resettle Cubans and Haitians, and in 1998 opened a suboffice in Lexington.

In 1999, Carol Young succeeded Donna Craig as KRM Executive Director. Until her retirement in 2009, she carried on Donna Craig's strong advocacy role and commitment to developing KRM's network of church, social service, public and philanthropic partners.

KRM's 40-person staff currently resettles more than 800 refugee arrivals a year. The agency locates housing, food, clothing and medical care for these newcomers, and provides them with case management, English classes, community orientation, and job placement services. KRM also offers programs for youth and elderly refugees, as well as citizenship and immigration legal services. Since KRM's founding, church co-sponsors and volunteers have provided integral support in all areas of resettlement.

At the June 12<sup>th</sup> dinner, Donna Craig, Carol Young, and current Executive Director Liz Kaznak will present awards to five individuals whose committed service exemplifies the welcoming spirit this community has extended to KRM's refugee clients over the last 20 years:

**Dr. Christopher Watkins, MD**, Obstetrician/Gynecologist with Norton Hospitals. Chris Watkins has stood out within the local medical community for his commitment to provide accessible and culturally-sensitive care to refugee women in Louisville. **Ramsi Kumar**, owner of Ramsi's Café on the World restaurant. Ramsi Kumar has employed refugees, donated food for a variety of KRM events, including our weekly cultural orientation program, where he inspires newly-arrived clients to embrace their adopted home and the opportunities available here. **Joe Norris**, co-founder/owner/principal of Commonwealth Capital Management, LLC. A longtime donor and advisor to KRM with an informed global perspective and a fervent belief in the contributions refugees make to Kentucky, Joe Norris has helped KRM develop its strategic vision and spread its mission of encouraging hope. **Harry Pickens**, noted jazz pianist, composer and social activist. Harry Pickens has touched many groups of refugee children and adults at KRM with his musical outreach. He has also conducted several landmark community concerts featuring local refugees and longtime Louisville residents to produce a musical expression of diversity and shared humanity. **Debbie Goonan**, clinical social worker and church volunteer from Christ The King Cathedral, Lexington. Debbie has educated and advocated for refugees, leading by her example to inspire others to volunteer in KRM's Lexington office.

The anniversary dinner will feature food from a variety of local international restaurants, including Havana Rumba, Queen of Sheba, Zaytun, The Grape Leaf, Simply Thai, Corner Deli Food, Café Classico, Ramsi's, local Iraqi chef Duraid Abdurridha; coffee from Highland Coffee and tea from McCallister's.

The dinner and awards ceremony will be held on Saturday, June 12<sup>th</sup>, from 6 – 9 pm in the Pleune-Mobley Center at Kentucky Refugee Ministries, 969-B Cherokee Road, Louisville, KY 40204. Tickets are \$20, with limited seating available. Please RSVP to Cassie Kennedy at (502) 479-9180 x53 or [krm20thcelebration@gmail.com](mailto:krm20thcelebration@gmail.com).

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