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Providence refugee center ready to help migrants sent to Martha's Vineyard

by TEMI-TOPE ADELEYE, NBC 10 NEWS | Thu, September 15th 2022, 5:39 PM EDT

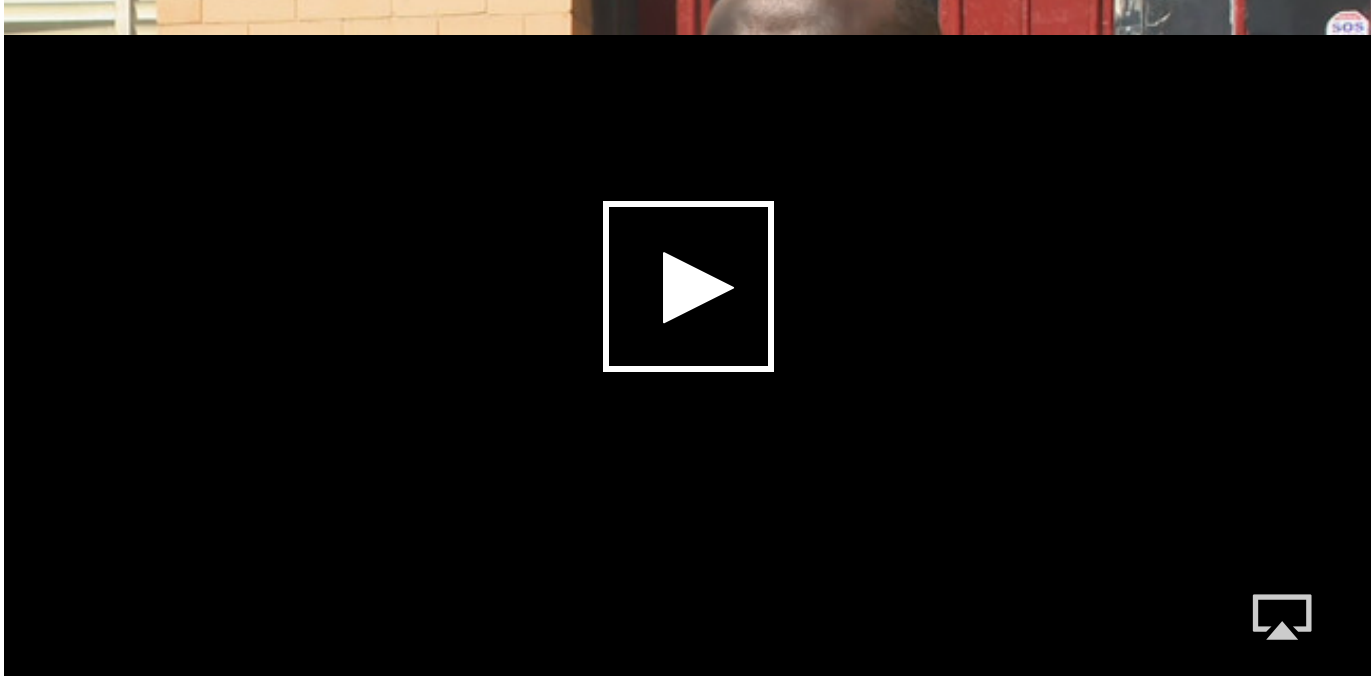


The Refugee Dream Center in Providence provides assistance to refugees in the form of social assistance, referrals and job training.. (WJAR)



PROVIDENCE, R.I. (WJAR) — Following the arrival of Venezuelan immigrants on an island off Massachusetts, the conversation about undocumented migrants continues in Rhode Island.

Local nonprofit organizations are buckling up to figure out how they might help if their services are needed.



NBC 10's Temi-Topé Adeleye talks to the founder of the Refugee Dream Center in Providence.

Omar Bah, the founder of the Refugee Dream Center, said Thursday that the organization aids immigrants and refugees every day and that their assistance will extend to the undocumented immigrants who arrived unexpectedly on Martha's Vineyard on Wednesday night.

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"The bottom line is that Martha's Vineyard is not a Massachusetts issue. It's an issue for both Rhode Island and Massachusetts," said Bah.

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Bah, once a refugee from The Gambia and a recent candidate for Congress, said he was shocked when he learned about what happened in Martha's Vineyard.

"It is not what America stands for. We are a humanitarian country, a country where it's a land of immigrants, people come from diverse backgrounds from all over the world," said Bah.

"[They] live together, and build futures, and achieve the American Dream, and it is very inhumane to put two planes of immigrants and dump them where they don't know nobody and they were not prepared for," he said.

The [migrants' arrival on Martha's Vineyard](#) is part of a bigger tactic by Republican governors to draw attention to what they say are failed border policies.



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Massachusetts' Gov. Charlie Baker, who is also a Republican, said he was in touch with local officials to ensure a short-term shelter was provided for the 50 migrants.

Dorcas International, the primary immigration and refugee center in Rhode Island, and one of the refugee center's partners met with Providence city leaders Thursday.

They discussed how they can take an organized and coordinated approach to aid the migrants.

"We should be acting and reaching out to the governor's office to other partners like Dorcas and see what we can be doing in terms of housing and supplies and food," said Bah.

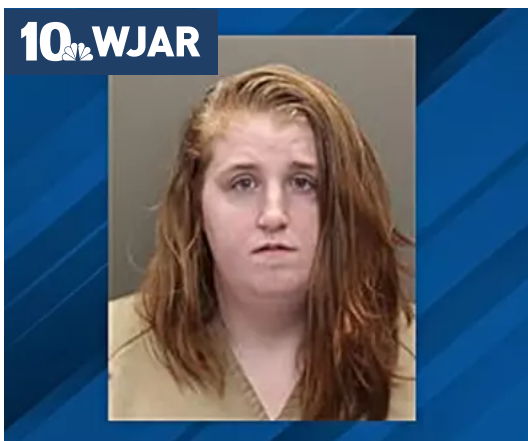
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Bah said Rhode Island leaders should also look into investing in legal aid fees which prove to be expensive for newcomers.

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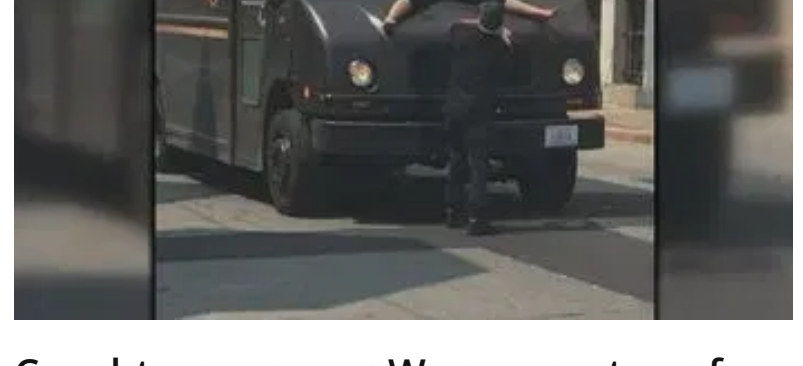
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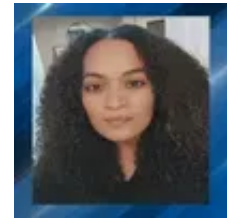
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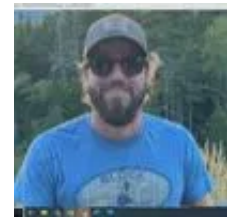
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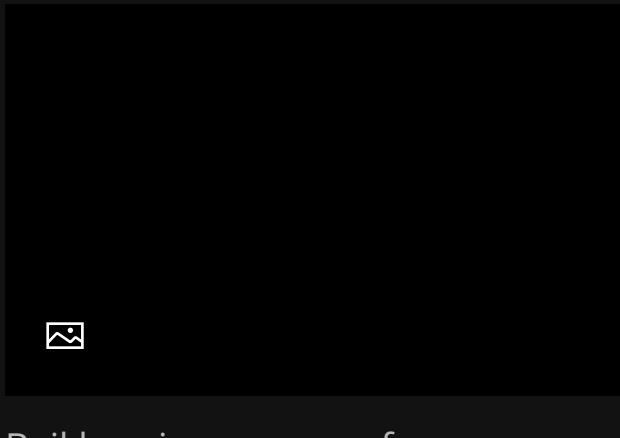
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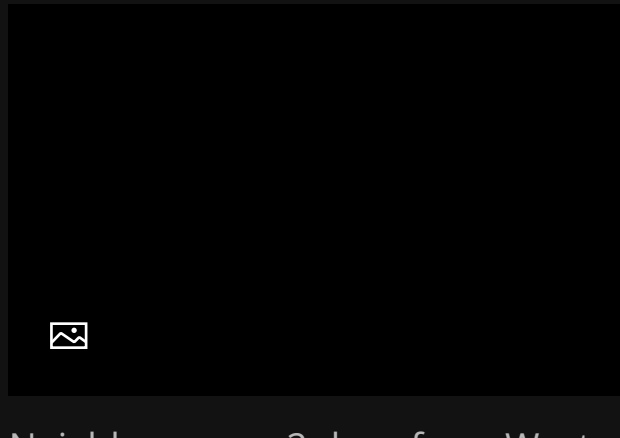
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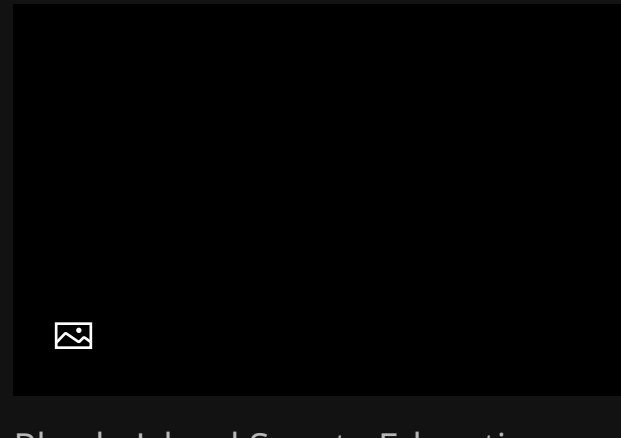
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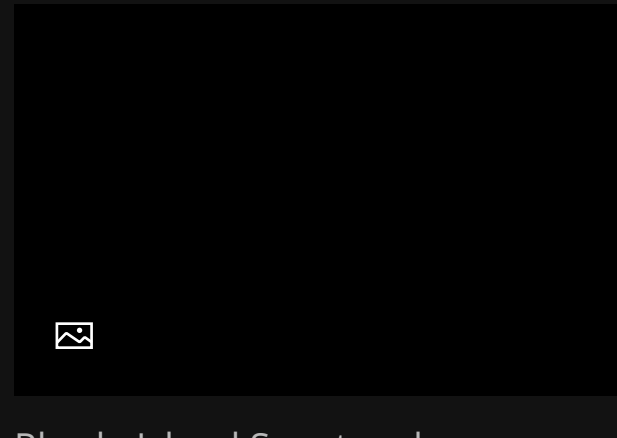
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