

# The Providence Journal

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## Fitz's Hits: Do more than cheer Refugee Olympic Team; Put vandals to work on Little League field

**Edward Fitzpatrick** The Providence Journal

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### Absolutely!

It's absolutely good to see the first-ever Refugee Olympic Team in Rio: It's good to see the Olympics aren't ignoring the worst refugee crisis since World War II, and it's good to see 10 refugee athletes representing the estimated 65 million displaced people in the world. But it's also absolutely essential that the world, including the U.S., do more to help refugees. Omar Bah, founder and executive director of the Refugee Dream Center in Providence, said the Olympic Refugee Team "provides an opportunity to see refugees as human beings" and "not be swayed by the political discourse." At the same time, "it provides an opportunity for the world to provide more support for refugees — to increase protection and to increase resettlement, particularly in the United States," he said. "And it provides an opportunity for the world to reduce or minimize conflicts that cause displacements of people across the world." Bah said we can do more than just cheer on the refugees in Rio: We can support groups such as the Refugee Dream Center, and we can visit refugees in Rhode Island. "You don't have to watch them on TV," he said. "They are right here."

### YouGottaBeKiddingMe

Vandalism is always a pointless and stupid crime — an act that does damage while providing no profit. But it's particularly galling to see that vandals hit a Little League field in Warwick. The Journal's Bill Koch reports that "The Pit" — as the Warwick North Little League field is affectionately known — was targeted by two teen vandals who were eventually arrested after the police posted a photo online of a boy who posed in front of a security camera at the field. The police determined the boy did not commit the vandalism, but the posting led to a tip and the arrests. As a Little League coach, I share the outrage that Bill Fischer, president of True North Communications, expressed on Twitter after reading about the vandalism. "I want to reach out and say, 'You're going down the wrong road,'" he said, adding that instead of 100 hours of

community service, the culprits should have to read 100 books. I say make them the grounds crew for 100 Little League games.