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TAKING A STAKE

The Abell Foundation's
Robert C. Embry Jr. talks
investment strategy.
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Som Bhattarai, a refugee from Bhutan, is a housekeeper at the Sheraton Baltimore City Center.

Starting over

Baltimore trying to match the world's refugees with jobs

SARAH MEEHAN | STAFF
smeehan@bizjournals.com

Part 1 of 2

Next week

Many refugees are here to stay
and are looking for long-term
careers instead of menial jobs.
How do refugees figure into the
future of Baltimore?

Som Bhattarai spent nearly half his life in a Bhutanese refugee camp before making his way to Baltimore last December. Here, he works at the Sheraton Baltimore City Center Hotel as a housekeeper — half a world away from the life he knew as a farmer in Bhutan and teacher in nearby Nepal.

Bhattarai is part of a growing group of refugees who have found a new home in Maryland. But as

more refugees and asylum-seekers resettle in the state, many join the 7 percent of Marylanders who are unemployed.

To help get them ready to work, Baltimore sought — and won — renewal of a \$150,000 federal grant to aid

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Price tag high on 2nd cruise berth

State says \$50M terminal
could attract more ships

JACK LAMBERT | STAFF
jacklambert@bizjournals.com

A second cruise terminal in Locust Point could cost up to \$50 million and help attract additional cruise business to the Port of Baltimore. But the cost — and a lack of state funds — might delay possible cruise expansion and hold back a growing industry in the city.

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"Port of Baltimore."

The Maryland Port Administration has long considered adding a second cruise berth in Locust Point, near the existing South Locust Point Cruise Terminal. The terminal would likely be located in North Locust Point, port sources say. Current cruise lines would likely be interested in adding ships in Baltimore and the MPA

expects it could lure other liners to the city. Yet a lack of space and sailing days has kept cruise lines from expanding operations here.

"With the situation we have in the terminal right now, we can only handle one ship per day," said Richard M. Scher, a spokesman for the port administration.

An economic study estimated a new terminal in

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Employers face 'explosion' of lawsuits over wages, overtime pay

GARY HABER | STAFF
ghaber@bizjournals.com

Lawsuits complaining about withheld overtime, underpaid wages and other pay issues are seeing a striking increase as the economy continues to drag.

The number of so-called wage-and-hour lawsuits by current or former employees has jumped 384 percent since 1993, according to Seyfarth Shaw LLP, a national law firm based in Chicago that represents employers. These types of lawsuits can hit any type of business, but restaurants and retailers are particu-

larly vulnerable.

The rise in lawsuits comes as many small-business owners continue to struggle in a tough economy in which consumers are spending less. At the same time, many workers are suffering, too. Many have been laid off, or seen their hours reduced, making it tough to make ends meet.

"When the economy is bad, people become litigious because they become less confident that they'll find a job when they lose a job," said Richard Hafets, managing partner of Jackson Lewis LLP's Baltimore office. Wage-and-hour lawsuits have become "the

cause of action du jour," he said.

Some 7,064 suits were filed in federal courts this year through March 31. That topped the 7,006 brought in all of 2011. It is also a nearly fourfold increase from the 1,457 cases filed in 1993.

In U.S. District Court in Maryland, the number of labor cases, which includes wage-and-hour complaints, spiked in the past decade. There were 259 cases in 2011, compared with 149 in 2001, according to court data. Pending wage-and-hour lawsuits

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DRUG WARS

Doctors,
pharmacists
in turf battle.

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CYBER DOLLARS

Where the VC
is going in a
growing industry.

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Refugees: Arrivals often find that U.S. isn't land of 'cookies and cream'

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about 160 refugees. The city's Board of Estimates selected Lutheran Social Services to oversee the program on Aug. 29.

Baltimore is one of only 25 metropolitan areas in the country to receive the funding, because of its high refugee population, which has grown every year since 2007. Only 648 refugees resettled in Maryland that year, but twice that number — 1,278 — resettled in the state in fiscal 2011, according to the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement.

The demand for the services is matched only by programs' need for participating companies — not always easy when hiring has slowed in the recession.

Lutheran Social Services of The National Capital Area and the International Rescue Committee are both working to find jobs at any level for these legal immigrants in the Baltimore region.

Bhattarai, 42, worked with the International Rescue Committee when he arrived in the city with his wife and four children.

Despite language barriers and few opportunities outside of low-level positions, about three-quarters of refugees and asylees have found jobs in Maryland since 2007. State officials, such as Martin Ford, associate director of the Maryland Office for Refugees and Asylees, say it's because they are willing to start from scratch.

"They have nurtured these expectations that life will be cookies and cream, but once they get here they're told they've got to get a job and the job will often mean long hours, hard work, and many of them do accept that," Ford said. "It means working in ways that a lot of Americans no longer do — that work ethic."

The bottom rung

Like Bhattarai, refugees often take starter jobs for companies such as Sheraton, Under Armour and Lancaster Foods — some of the International Rescue Committee's employer part-



Som Bhattarai, with interpreter and cultural orientation assistant Yadu Baskota, said it was difficult getting acclimated to the U.S.

ners — and work their way up. Many come with extensive work experience and education but no record of it, said Jane Plimack, employment coordinator at the International Rescue Committee.

"We stress the importance of first jobs — you've got to get your foot in the door, you've got to get some work experience, you need work history," Plimack said. "Employers look at these resumes and applications and Ethiopia's where they've worked and you can't get a job reference."

Ruben Chandrasekar, executive director of the International Rescue Committee in Baltimore, said managing people's expectations is critical because taking a lower level job can be frustrating to a skilled individual.

"You really have to sometimes tap into their own experience and say, 'Listen, you have gone through so many challenges in your life — from fleeing for your life, protecting your family, living through various harsh conditions. Are you telling me that you're unable to get up and take this job to continue

to do those things that you've done so well?' " Chandrasekar said. "A setback isn't necessarily a weakness. Taking a job that is less than what you thought is not the end of the world — it's a step in the right direction."

Refugees and asylum-seekers alike flee their home countries for fear of persecution or death. The difference is that refugees request protected status prior to entering the U.S., while asylees seek it after they arrive.

On average in Maryland, about 988 refugees and asylees enroll in employment services annually, and employment specialists first establish which organization should help them find work.

The International Rescue Committee offers intensified employment services for up to six months and typically serves more skilled or educated refugees and asylees, while Lutheran Social Services can work with harder-to-place refugees for up to five years.

It's meant to be a quick process — the sooner refugees and asylees find

work, the better.

"So they may arrive on a Tuesday, be seen by a case worker on Thursday and we are doing employment evaluations the following week," Plimack said.

Plimack and Melissa Laubach, an employment specialist for the International Rescue Committee, worked with Bhattarai to secure his new job. They examined his skill set, explained how to fill out applications and taught him the basics of American work etiquette, such as what to wear in the workplace — typical training for their clients.

"It's hard to realize — that American world of work comes second nature to us," Ford said.

The challenges

The language barrier can be a struggle, as well. Bhattarai took English classes as part of his job preparation.

"When I came here in the beginning it was a bit difficult for me," Bhattarai said through an interpreter. "But later when I learned English and learned much more about this area, I'm used to it."

He bounced between several jobs at first, but found a fit at the Sheraton.

"I went many places but this is the best where I am now," Bhattarai said.

Bhattarai is part of a recent wave of refugees from Asia. From fiscal 2007 to fiscal 2011, 29 percent of refugees who resettled in Maryland were Burmese, 23 percent were Bhutanese and 17 percent were from Iraq, the Maryland Office for Refugees and Asylees reported. Most asylees — 84 percent — came from various countries in Africa.

Mamadou Sy, program director for refugee and immigrant services for Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area, noted the local refugee and asylee demographic is dictated both by world events and foreign policy.

"Over the years we have seen a shift in the refugee profile, but the challenges that refugees face are almost the same," Sy said.

How many times should you advertise?

The answer may surprise you.

In 1885, London businessman Thomas Smith offered the following advice to advertisers. It is still applicable today:

- The 1st time people look at any given ad, they don't even see it.
- The 2nd time, they don't notice it.
- The 3rd time, they are aware that it is there.
- The 4th time, they have a fleeting sense that they've seen it somewhere before.
- The 5th time, they actually read the ad.
- The 6th time, they thumb their nose at it.
- The 7th time, they start to get a little irritated with it.
- The 8th time, they start to think, "Here's that confounded ad again."
- The 9th time, they start to wonder if they may be missing out on something.
- The 10th time, they ask their friends and neighbors if they've tried it.
- The 11th time, they wonder how the company is paying for all these ads.
- The 12th time, they start to think that it must be a good product.
- The 13th time, they start to feel the product has value.
- The 14th time, they start to remember wanting a product exactly like this for a long time.
- The 15th time, they start to yearn for it because they can't afford to buy it.
- The 16th time, they accept the fact that they will buy it sometime in the future.
- The 17th time, they make a note to buy the product.
- The 18th time, they curse their poverty for not allowing them to buy this terrific product.
- The 19th time, they count their money very carefully.
- The 20th time prospects see the ad, they buy what it is offering.

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***Repetition is
the answer.***

MALL SHOPPING

Verstendig plans to aggressively pursue Owings Mills Mall.
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Sina Navazi, caseworker with the International Rescue Committee, uses his experience as an Iranian refugee to help others who come to the committee for assistance.

NICHOLAS GRINER | STAFF

A tough lesson

Highly educated refugees struggle to find meaningful work

SARAH MEEHAN | STAFF
smeehan@bizjournals.com

Part 2 of 2

Starting Over

Last week, we looked at efforts by Baltimore agencies to help refugees find work. Go to baltimorebusinessjournal.com and type in the keyword "refugee."

But as a refugee from Iran, it's difficult for Raoofi to get back into her field. She is among many refugees and asylees who have trouble moving beyond the starter jobs they take to gain their footing after

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DuClaw finds home in Rosedale

Brewer's move comes as a blow to Harford County

JAMES BRIGGS | STAFF
jbriggs@bizjournals.com

DuClaw Brewing Co. has leased 62,000 square feet in Baltimore County for a new headquarters and brewery to keep pace with demand for its line of two dozen craft beers.



Benfield

The brewery will move more than 20 employees from Abingdon to an industrial building at 8901 Yellow Brick Road in Rosedale, CEO David Benfield said. DuClaw plans to start brewing in Rosedale early next year and hire up to 35 people for production, distribution, sales and marketing jobs.

The company plans to invest \$3.8 million to relocate, buy new equipment and increase brewing capacity.

The lease concludes a yearlong real estate search, during which Benfield said sales nearly doubled.

"Our world's changed from trying to convince people to try some of the crazy beers we make to having people push for us to make more kinds," Benfield said.

The company does not release revenue figures, but Benfield said DuClaw is on pace to sell 7,000 barrels of

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Locust Point development may hit snag

JACK LAMBERT | STAFF
jacklambert@bizjournals.com

Westway Terminals Co. knows its days in Locust Point may be numbered.

The company's chemical-storage tanks sit on the site of the proposed athletic fields of Under Armour's expanded corporate campus in South Baltimore. The city has proposed relocating Westway's tanks, and the Maryland Port Administration says nearby neighborhoods could benefit from industrial development that a company like Westway might provide.

But the MPA says it lacks the funds to buy a new parcel for Westway. It might take a public-private partnership to purchase the land needed to move Westway's 15 tanks in Locust Point, which could delay development of the corporate campus for the rapidly growing Under Armour.

Westway has said it would be amenable to a move, given the right price. The chemical-storage company, which services 15 Maryland companies and employed 20 people at its terminal near Key Highway in 2011,

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NICHOLAS GRINER | STAFF

Westway is sitting on land eyed by Under Armour for an expanded corporate campus.

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STAYING SOLO

Pressures wear on independent hospitals.
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SNAP SHOT

A look at the city's tourism and convention sectors.

Focus.
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DuClaw: Brewer plans hires, \$3.8 million worth of work at new site

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beer this year, an increase from 3,700 in 2011.

The Baltimore County site was not the company's first choice. The brewery spent several months negotiating to buy a 165,000-square-foot building in Havre de Grace, but Benfield said he could not complete due diligence within the building owner's time frame.

DuClaw's move to Rosedale is a blow to Harford County, which for months anticipated new jobs coming with the brewery's expansion.

"I will have to see what was worked out for the company [in Baltimore County]," said James C. Richardson, Harford County's economic development director. "But job growth and expansion in the region is good for business up and down the corridor."

Dan Gundersen, director of Baltimore County's Department of Economic Development, hopes DuClaw's move signals momentum for the county's east side, which has nearly a dozen business parks.

Industrial space in the Baltimore County East submarket was 11.7 per-



NICHOLAS GRINER | STAFF

A worker checks a batch at DuClaw's former plant. DuClaw had been looking for a new location for its headquarters for a year.

cent vacant during the second quarter, the second-highest rate in Greater Baltimore, according to MacKenzie Commercial Real Estate Services LLC.

"These areas are good for light manufacturing and distribution," Gundersen

said. "Some of the buildings have been vacant because of the great recession."

The county is ironing out a financial package for DuClaw, Gundersen said.

"The icing on the cake would be if we could arrange some financing that would

be helpful to get them in the building more quickly," he said.

Although Benfield would have preferred to stay in Harford County, where he grew up, he said the Baltimore County building offers 24-foot ceilings and two floors of offices, making it a better fit than the former Collins & Aikman Corp. plant in Havre de Grace would have been.

The new building gives DuClaw the capacity to brew more than 125,000 barrels of beer per year, Benfield said. The company projects 15,000 barrels of production next year and 30,000 in 2014.

DuClaw distributes beer to parts of Maryland, Virginia and Pennsylvania. By next year, Benfield said, he'd like to ship beer to all areas of those states, as well as New Jersey, Delaware, southern New York and northern North Carolina.

If the company outgrows its new headquarters, Benfield said he'd likely open another facility rather than moving again.

"It's hard for me to even fathom that," Benfield said. "At 150,000 barrels, it'd be hard for me to think about running a brewery, because I'd probably be doing cartwheels everywhere."

Refugees: Few resources exist to help skilled refugees leave menial jobs

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arriving in Baltimore.

Low-level jobs are an especially harsh reality for refugees, many of whom come here with extensive educational and professional experience. When refugees arrive, an initial evaluation of their professional background determines whether they might be good candidates for programs that help them return to their fields of expertise. But still, the city has limited resources to help this skilled group thrive.

The Struggle

Raoofi knows this. She ran an English institute prior to leaving Iran with her husband and three children. They arrived in the U.S. in April 2011 and received housing, cash assistance and employment services from the International Rescue Committee and Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area. Within two months she was employed at Mamma Ilardo's Pizzeria in the University of Maryland Medical Center, where she has worked ever since.

She made it clear to her pizzeria boss Harry Brigham, when she started, that she wanted to enter a more professional field, and he took her resume in case he heard of openings for interpreters.

Brigham has hired refugees and asylees from the International Rescue Committee for about five years, and about half his staff members are refugees. He said he has seen how their low-paying work often leaves little time for taking classes, networking and job hunting to further their careers when they're worrying about making enough to pay the bills.

"It can be hard for them to move on to the next thing because you're running — you're running 40 hours to make a paycheck to pay your rent," Brigham said.

Once she took the job, Raoofi said, she heard little to nothing from her caseworker at the International Rescue Committee.

"Where is that support after six months when you're still trying to figure things out? We can't put that back on [the International Rescue Committee], but we have to put that somewhere people can go and feel comfortable on a million things — on networking, job hunting, health insurance, driver's license," Brigham said. "That seems to be missing or I'm just not aware of it. I'm often that source for my crew."

The Resources

Lutheran Social Services began offering a refugee recertification program last year. It allows professionals who have immigrated to the U.S. to track down their certification from their home country and use it to enter a similar field. There are programs for nurses, teachers, accountants and engineers, but very few seats — only about 60 participants are enrolled now.

Raoofi's oldest daughter, who received an engineering degree in Iran, may look into recertification, Raoofi said. She came to the U.S. primarily so her children — the engineer, an aspiring pharmacist and a high school student — could escape religious persecution and find jobs. They have all had to work low-wage jobs simply to pay rent.

"I just care for my children," Raoofi said. "We have sacrificed all our lives in Iran because of our religion, and we just came here. I wanted them to use their talents, to develop their talents to be able to serve their people — not to have better material lives."

But they have only been here a short time.

"I'm sure that it will be better, but how? I don't know how much time I should spend to reach that dream,"

Raoofi said. "I know that it takes time, but they won't be young anymore. I won't be alive anymore."

But with time comes success. Ruben Chandrasekar, executive director of the International Rescue Committee in Baltimore, said he's watched some of his clients move to supervisory roles from low-level jobs, become translators and liaisons and work to serve other refugees.

Sina Navazi, a 24-year-old caseworker for the International Rescue Committee, came from Iran through the organization in 2009. His first job was stocking in a Rite Aid warehouse, though he, too, had hoped for a higher position.

"The first thing was, I got a reality slap that that's not what's gonna happen," Navazi said. Even so, he said, he was lucky that his Rite Aid job offered a decent enough wage.

"I was making good money so I could start at school really fast," he said. "I could buy a car really fast."

In January he made his way back to the International Rescue Committee and took a full-time position as a caseworker, where he uses his own experiences to connect with new clients.

The Future

As Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake aims to grow Baltimore by 10,000 families in 10 years, refugees could be an enormous part of her plan that focuses on attracting immigrants to the city. The International Rescue Committee resettles nearly 1,000 refugees and asylees in Baltimore annually. The key is keeping them here.

"They're a special community that I think believes in possibilities and is looking for a place to call home," Rawlings-Blake said. "I think Baltimore can be that place."

Raoofi moved out of the city to Cockeysville, and Navazi said she is not the first to do so.

"Most of the time the groups that are leaving are more professional, people with more education who are looking for higher goals," he said. "They're a population that would do so much good for the city if they stay."

While some have moved to join ethnic communities outside the city, others, like Raoofi, relocate based on the same issues long-time residents face, including safety, better schools and transportation.

The International Rescue Committee resettles many of its clients in northeast Baltimore, and Brigham has heard concerns from his employees that their neighborhoods are unsafe.

"If they can't get mobile or if they live in an area that's scaring them to death, they move," Brigham said. "It is a great work group but if they're afraid where they live, they want to leave."

Rawlings-Blake said improving the safety of the city is key to maintaining its population.

"Whether it's someone writing a check and investing in a property, or someone really, to me, writing a check with their feet by choosing to live there — you can't get that investment without safe neighborhoods," Rawlings-Blake said. "We still have a ways to go, but we're committed to working with the community and of course the police department to create safer neighborhoods throughout the city."

Other steps, such as implementing the Charm City Circulator or relocating second-language English classes to neighborhoods near refugees' homes, also give them more incentive to stay.

"Those things that would keep refugees in the city would be those things that would keep the average American," said Martin Ford, director of the Maryland Office for Refugees and Asylees. "The city has to be conscious that people feel safe and that their kids will have a better chance than they do."