



Institute for Public Policy
and Social Research
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

IPPSR PUBLIC POLICY FORUM SERIES SPRING 2022 – TUESDAY, MAY 10, 2022
MACKINAC ROOM, 5TH FLOOR, ANDERSON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT RESETTLEMENT IN MICHIGAN



ERIKA BROWN-BINION, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, REFUGEE DEVELOPMENT CENTER, LANSING

Erika Brown-Binion serves as the Executive Director of the Refugee Development Center (RDC) in Lansing. Brown-Binion leads the organization in its efforts to provide the education and social support refugees need to become self-sufficient. She has been on staff at the Refugee Development Center since 2008 and served as Assistant Director prior to this appointment. She has worked in education for the past 15 years as a literacy specialist, elementary school teacher, faculty at Lansing Community College. She holds a Master's Degree in Educational Administration.



BEN CABANAW, MICHIGAN STATE REFUGEE COORDINATOR, OFFICE OF GLOBAL MICHIGAN, DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY (LEO)

Ben Cabanaw is the State Refugee Coordinator and State Administrative Manager for the Refugee Services Program within the Office of Global Michigan. He has held this position since 2018. Previously, he served as a manager in the State of Michigan Office of Refugee Services where he was responsible for program oversight for statewide refugee services programming and fiscal oversight. He received his Bachelor's Degree in Sociology from Taylor University and his Master's in Public Policy from Walden University.



**ANDY JOHNSTON, SENIOR VICE-PRESIDENT,
GRAND RAPIDS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

Andy Johnston serves as the Senior Vice-President of Government Affairs at the Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce. He leads advocacy efforts on behalf of Grand Rapids Chamber members and West Michigan Chamber Coalition.

Johnston is responsible for managing the Chamber's public policy efforts on behalf of more than 2,300 members before local, state, and federal stakeholders. He manages advocacy efforts of the West Michigan Chamber Coalition. He also serves as a member of the Chamber's Leadership Team, responsible for strategic planning and execution, organizational development, day-to-day decision making, marketing and communications. Johnston received his Bachelor's Degree in International Relations from Michigan State University.



**SUSAN KRAGT, BRANCH DIRECTOR, REFUGEE AND
IMMIGRANT SERVICES, BETHANY CHRISTIAN SERVICES,
GRAND RAPIDS**

Susan Kragt joined Bethany Christian Services in 2020 as Branch Director of Refugee and Immigrant Services in Grand Rapids, MI. She has worked in refugee services in the Grand Rapids area for more than 10 years, including time as an AmeriCorps VISTA in Bethany's Adult and Family Refugee program. Most recently, she served as Executive Director of the Refugee Education Center. Susan has a Master's Degree in Public Administration and Non-Profit Management from Grand Valley State University.