



**DENISE MERRILL**

SECRETARY OF THE STATE  
CONNECTICUT

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## **SECRETARY MERRILL TO JOIN CONNECTICUT IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE COALITION IN HONORING IMMIGRANTS AND THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS**

RWANDA GENOCIDE SURVIVOR DANIEL NDAMWIZEYE TO GIVE KEYNOTE ADDRESS  
FOR 14<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL IMMIGRANT DAY CEREMONY

**HARTFORD:** Secretary of the State Denise Merrill announced today that the Secretary of the State's Office will again be partnering with the Connecticut Immigrant and refugee Coalition (CIRC) to host the 14<sup>th</sup> annual "Immigrant Day" at the State Capitol. Immigrant Day honors immigrants from Connecticut, and celebrates their long lasting contributions to their communities and professions. Immigrant Day will be held on Thursday, April 14<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. in the Old Judiciary Room of the State Capitol, honoring 18 immigrants who live in Connecticut. A complete list of honorees can be found at the end of this news release.

"It is our pleasure here at the State Capitol to host the 14<sup>th</sup> annual Immigrant Day. Immigrants play an important role in the diversity and vitality of both the state of Connecticut and our society as a whole," said Secretary Merrill. "This day will showcase the lasting impact that each of our honorees has had on their own community, and highlight the valuable contributions all immigrants have made here in Connecticut. The success our country has experienced has always been indebted to the hard work of immigrants, and we must never cease to forget their tireless contributions."

Secretary Merrill, along with other state dignitaries, will be honoring 18 immigrants from across the state, including this year's keynote speaker Daniel Ndamwizeye. Daniel Ndamwizeye, also known as Daniel Trust, is a motivational speaker and entrepreneur originally from Rwanda who is currently and undergraduate student at Southern Connecticut State University studying Business Administration. Ndamwizeye survived the brutal 1994 genocide in Rwanda, but lost both parents and two sisters. Mr. Ndamwizeye, who is fluent in five languages, is the founder and chairman of the D-Trust Foundation, established in 2010 to assist orphaned children in their

educational and career goals. Daniel Ndamwizeye’s last name means “I trust him” in Kinyarwanda, a language spoken in Rwanda.

Secretary Merrill will also be joining the CIRC in presenting the Myra M. Oliver Award to Mark Stephanou of Norwich. The Myra M. Oliver Award is given to those who work above and beyond the call of duty to help refugees and immigrants, in memory of Myra M. Oliver’s lifetime of leadership and service. Stephanou was born and raised in Norwich and graduated from Bucknell University. He began working for then Congressman Chris Dodd in 1980 as a caseworker in the Norwich office, specializing in immigration and citizenship issues. He followed Congressman Dodd to the United States Senate and served Senator Dodd as director of constituent services in his Hartford and Wethersfield offices until the Senator’s retirement in 2010. During that time, he had the opportunity and privilege to work with Myra Oliver herself and the staff of the International Institute in helping Connecticut’s immigrant community.

Immigrant Day is an annual event sponsored by the Connecticut Immigrant and Refugee Coalition (CIRC) and the Secretary of the State’s Office. The general public may RSVP by contacting Robert Fishman at (860) 727-5701 or [jfact@mcmgmt.com](mailto:jfact@mcmgmt.com).

The Connecticut Immigrant and Refugee coalition is an association of ethnic and social service organizations working to promote the rights and opportunities of immigrants and refugees in Connecticut, and to foster their civic participation.

## **April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2011 – 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Immigrant Day Honorees**

	<u>Country of Origin</u>	<u>CT Residence</u>
<b><u>Keynote Speaker</u></b>		
Daniel Ndamqizeye	Rwanda	Bridgeport
<b><u>Honorees</u></b>		
Franck Adjisegbe	Benin	Westport
Dr. Ali Antar	Egypt	Bristol
Dr. Patrick Asiedu	Ghana	Orange
Marilou Dusyn	Philippines	Hartford
Dr. Faquir Jain	India	Mansfield
Laurie Julian	South Korea	Bloomfield
Dr. Eitan Kilchevsky	Israel	Newtown
Josef Kleszczynski	Poland	West Hartford
Danelle Ragoonanan-Storph	Trinidad	Stamford
Syed Raza	Pakistan	Glastonbury
Manuel Rodrigues	Portugal	Coventry
Catalina Samper-Horak	Colombia	Darien
Quynh Tran	Vietnam	West Hartford
Hazmira Udovicic	Bosnia	Hartford
Natasha Ulyanovsky	Ukraine	Newington
Rev. Joscelyn Williams	Jamaica	Bloomfield
Dr. Emmett Wilson	Guyana	Windsor