

VOICE

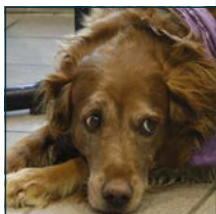
Today's Voice, Tomorrow's Vision

- **Veterinary Wellbeing**
- **Compounding Bill Passes**
- **CVMA Convention 2016**



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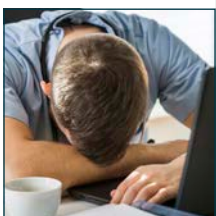
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CVMA Events and Deadlines

July 21

Ways Receptionists Can Market
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August 16

Dermatology Toolbox: An
Interactive Case Discussion and
Diagnostic Approach to the
Pruritic Pet — Denver

August 18

Creating the 5-Star Experience for
Surgery and Dentistry | Webinar

August 24

Personal Wellbeing | Webinar

September 14

PDS: Immune Blood Disorders and
Fever of Unknown Origin — Denver

September 15

Follow-Up Calls That Increase
Patient Visits | Webinar

September 21

The Top 5 Customer Service Tips
to Set You Apart | Webinar

September 22-25

CVMA Convention 2016 — Loveland

October 8-9

CVMA CE Southwest — Durango

October 20

10 Ways to Get Cats to Return
for Care | Webinar

October 21-22

CVMA BIG Ideas Forum | Fall 2016
— Breckenridge

October 26

PDS: Hematology, Cytology, and
Hemostasis to Aid in Diagnosis of
Disease — Denver



Colorado Veterinary
Medical Association

Our Mission

*To enhance animal
and human health
and welfare, and
advance the knowledge
and wellbeing of
Colorado veterinarians.*

OF NOTE

Internationally Trained Veterinarians Integrating in Colorado

Carrie Miller, Career Development Coordinator
Colorado Welcome Back Center | Spring Institute for Intercultural Learning

Which country were you educated in? Was your education completed in the U.S., in U.S. recognized countries (i.e., the U.K., Australia, New Zealand, or Canada), or outside these countries? The answers to these questions are more important than the average person may realize, especially for veterinary medicine. Nearly 1 in 10 Coloradans is foreign-born, and of this population, over 26 percent hold a Bachelor's degree or higher from abroad to practice as a veterinarian. Needless to say, these professionals, even those who have international credentials and impressive employment histories, cannot legally practice medicine until they go through all mandatory licensing requirements.

While there are pathways for most healthcare professionals to become recertified in their given professions, there are more barriers to licensure than solutions. Many highly skilled immigrants drop out of the process—not because of deficient skills or poor training, but because of how long and complicated these pathways are, how much they cost, and the bias against international training.

Accordingly, many immigrants find themselves underemployed, working in low-wage and low-skilled occupations (e.g., taxicab drivers, cashiers, production workers). This phenomenon is a tragic waste of skills and talent that continues to reverberate across the nation. There must be a better solution, one that utilizes the skills and talents of these high-skilled immigrants. That's where the Colorado Welcome Back program comes in.

As a program of the Spring Institute for Intercultural Learning (a not-for-profit organization), the Colorado Welcome Back (CWB) program was launched in 2010 to help internationally trained healthcare professionals re-establish their careers in healthcare. There are over 600 participants enrolled in CWB from 86 countries and over 40 different healthcare careers represented in the program (e.g., physicians, nurses, pharmacists, dentists, caregivers, and veterinarians). Services are extended (free of charge) to anyone who has education, training, and/or work experience from a country outside of the U.S. in healthcare. These services include, but are not limited to, career planning and development, educational case management, referrals to academic programs and community resources, professional development workshops, and job placement support. In short, CWB helps these professionals gain U.S. experience as well as obtain volunteer and employment opportunities that will help them achieve their long-term career objectives.

We also work with veterinarians in the program. Our veterinarians come with rich, diverse experiences from Mexico, Peru, Sudan, and Iraq and speak English, Spanish, and Arabic. Their length of residence in the U.S. ranges from just a few months to over 18 years. Several of them hold VMD degrees, whereas a few hold degrees in Animal Production. International graduates

who wish to follow the recertification process must get their education evaluated and their language abilities and clinical skills assessed before they can register for board exams, complete internships, and navigate through the pathway. Others choose a different pathway entirely—going back to school, which was the case for Huda Tawir.

Huda Tawir is a veterinarian from Sudan who has a family and a sweet demeanor, and is excited about her future. She graduated in 1998 from the University of Nyala in Sudan obtaining a Bachelor's Degree in Veterinary Science. In Sudan, Huda had nearly 10 years of experience working in the veterinary medicine field, mostly for the state government in a number of capacities, including as a veterinary extension officer, manager of slaughterhouse, reporter/correspondent, and veterinary practitioner. Some of her day-to-day responsibilities included educating farmers about humanely raising their sheep, goats, camels, and cattle; increasing public awareness about zoonotic diseases; and broadcasting to the media and communities about such issues.

Huda moved to the U.S. a few years ago to get a better education, but her career interests and passions remain the same. In 2014, Huda completed her Master's degree in Integrated Resource Management from Colorado State University and has been accepted into CSU's School of Public Health for another Master's degree. A few of Huda's goals include working with an international health organization and completing an internship with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. These are not small goals by any means. Huda enthusiastically commented that she “has to prove her skills, increase her English and computer experience, and [gain more] experience.” With that determination and drive, Huda will certainly go far. “It's still hard, but I feel lucky and . . . I still have hope [so I will] give it a chance.” While Huda has made significant progress identifying her career pathway, her journey is not complete, but is nevertheless promising with continued support from her networks.

The majority of high-skilled refugees and immigrants, however, find themselves unsure of how to navigate these career pathways, which one to take, and how to cultivate the resources (e.g., money, social capital) necessary to get back to their original career. Their journeys are indeed long and complicated, but not impossible. Through the Colorado Welcome Back program, we are able to get these high-skilled professionals back on their feet and into satisfying occupations.

If you would be interested in learning more about connecting with these veterinary professionals or for more information about Colorado Welcome Back or to explore how our participants can meet your volunteer or employment needs, please contact Carrie Miller at 303.831.1104 or cmiller@springinstitute.org. ■