

# ECDC NEWS

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## **Sara Tompkins Named Program Director For ECDC's African Community Center**

Sara Tompkins, a former staff attorney for the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty, has assumed new duties as program director for the ECDC African Community Center in Arlington, Virginia, responsible for the development and delivery of needed social and health services to newcomers in the metropolitan Washington, D.C. area.

Under a recent reorganization, the Center will provide a central management focus for local activities formerly administered through the Multicultural Community Services and Health Promotion and Education operations in Arlington, and the employment and social services functions of a separate office in the District of Columbia, said ECDC President Tsehaye Teferra.

A graduate of Pepperdine University and the University of Houston Law Center, Tompkins has specialized in issues of concern to refugee and immigrant newcomers. She served as immigration manager and program coordinator for the Interfaith Ministries of Greater Houston, where she coordinated medical and mental health services, assisted in refugee resettlement and represented clients in immigration cases such as applications for asylum, adjustment of status and citizenship.

While pursuing her Juris Doctorate degree in night school, she represented clients through the University of Houston Law Center Immigration Clinic; served as a Legal Fellow at the Texas Center for Immigrant Legal Assistance, Associated Catholic Charities; and worked as a legal advocate at the Houston Area Women's Center, providing information, referrals and advocacy to victims of domestic violence, many of whom were immigrants.

"To her new assignment, Sara brings a valued combination of training, experience and personal commitment," Teferra said. "Under her leadership and through the new organizational structure, we will sustain and improve both the quality and delivery of services to the growing refugee and immigrant population in the metropolitan area."

Established in 1983, ECDC promotes cultural, educational and socio-economic development programs to help refugees and immigrants become productive members of their new homeland; provides a wide range of social and support services; and conducts public education programs to expand awareness of their needs, concerns and potential contributions to the nation's cultural, social and economic vitality. Initially created to serve the area's growing Ethiopian community, the non-profit agency has become a multi-service provider to a multicultural community, while preserving a special focus on African newcomers.

