

## GRRMHC Members Share View on Refugee Culture

Cultural communications are deeper and more complex than just reading books, researches, or scholarly articles. More than the printed words, material things and behavior are essential factors to consider in understanding people especially when the goal is improving service delivery and the helping process.

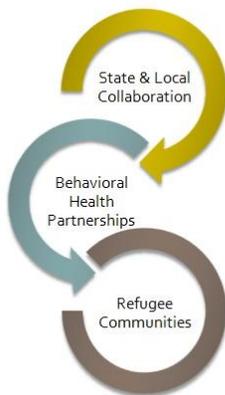


*Mr. Adhikari (left) and Mr. Abdelrahman (middle left), along with other panelists, answer questions from summit participants.*

In an attempt to broker understanding between the western culture and the culture where the refugees came from, two

members of the Greater Richmond Refugee Mental Health Councils were invited to share their community's view on mental Health during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Statewide Refugee Mental Health Summit. Mr. Abubaker Abdelrahman is the resettlement supervisor of Commonwealth Catholic Charities-Richmond. He grew up and educated in Sudan and had the experience of working with top-ranking British and other international officials to alleviate the refugee and IDP camps in Sudan prior to his resettlement in the United States. Mr. Om Adhikari spent his growing up years in a refugee camp in Nepal prior to his resettlement in the United States. Currently, he is the president of the Bhutanese Community of Greater Richmond, VA, a non-profit organization

that has helped many Bhutanese refugees who resettle in Richmond to adjust, adapt, and integrate. Through his leadership, the group continues to offer programs such as ESL classes, citizenship classes, support to citizenship application process, drivers education, prevention sessions, and more. Both gentlemen have extensive experience in leadership, community-based program development, and have a big heart to uplift the lives of their community members. Sharing their perspective on Sudanese and Bhutanese cultures, respectively, especially in relation to eliminating barriers to wellness has been well received by the summit participants which include agency executives, behavioral health providers, direct support professionals, and refugee leaders.



<http://www.dbhds.virginia.gov/professionals-and-service-providers/oclc/focus/refugee-mh>