

**Mona Tolba, Fletcher Free Library Commissioner**

South Burlington, Vermont, 05403

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Please accept this testimony as related to inclusive Services and Access to Public programs and services.

As an immigrant I found that The Fletcher Free Library is a very welcoming place for diversity, equity and inclusion. Fletcher Free Library welcomed me and my daughter for over 11 years, during these years we were able to attend early childhood programs for my daughter which helped her to develop beautifully as a strong reader, and a good student. It helped me personally connect with people, I felt library as a home for me especially as an immigrant who do not have family to rely on, I relied on the library for accessing resources, searching for jobs, looking for information. I found Fletcher Free Library is the most welcoming place that celebrates diversity and welcome all experiences and background of its members.

What the library offers, is the main backbone of support for refugees and immigrants, internet access, and assistance with Technology are few of many other programs these populations need when they first arrive to Vermont. The library hosts different languages learning classes including English, Arabic, French, and Spanish, monthly cooking book club, and many youth programs that are important in building and setting up them to positive and productive life.

The staff of the library are doing their best to serve the continually growing populations, I always hope that they have more resources allocated to serve the needs of refugees and immigrants, I always have hope one day, that the website is accessible in many different language and I wish that all other libraries follow the footsteps of Fletcher Free library, by having enough funding to translate the materials and become more welcoming and inclusive in their planning. It is important to think about refugees/immigrants needs as people of the community and the potential contributions that libraries can make in their life.

Thanks for your support and consideration of equity in all planning.

Sincerely,

Mona Tolba

Community member



