

REFUGEES

and occupational opportunities.

Phillips has lived throughout the world doing work with refugees in Ukraine, Jordan and the United Kingdom. He said the anti-refugee sentiment in the latter country was representative of a small minority of the population, as people were generally willing to help refugees to their new country.

“Most people, once they get their basic facts right are like, ‘Well, why wouldn’t we support? Why wouldn’t we be welcoming?’” Phillips said.

The friendliness and conviction to help those from difficult situations is why he chose to relocate to the Tar Heel state.

“When I was back here in the U.S., I saw this job pop up and being a native North Carolinian and caring a lot about this issue, I felt like it would be a good step for me to apply knowledge and skills to work for people coming to make a home in North Carolina,” Phillips said.

Shoshana Fried, an immigration attorney at Pisgah Legal Services in Asheville, helps immigrants with the paperwork necessary to begin to

establish residency in the U.S.

She said there has been a positive reception overall to new immigrant arrivals in the city, even in light of recent legislation aimed at curtailing the number of people coming to the U.S.

“We get calls all the time from community organizations and churches that want to help and want to know how they can help, and really the challenge is finding ways to engage the community because there’s so many people that want to help,” Fried said. “I think that Asheville is a welcoming town.”

Asheville is not particularly known for being a refugee resettlement hub. This is because, Phillips said, housing is costly and employment is seasonal.

He said there are other more optimal areas in the state for refugees to resettle which have steady jobs and a low cost of living.

“We’re generally one of the top states as far as numbers of arrivals go,” Phillips said. “Charlotte and the Triangle are very diverse, which means that they’re generally welcoming. We are fortunate that we have a lot of urban hubs that we can resettle in.”

Asheville’s refugee population

consists of individuals primarily from eastern Europe, specifically Ukraine and Russia. This particular demographic focus may be a result of a specific policy the U.S. had toward people from this area of the world.

“It was written into law actually, until 1980, only people from communist countries or from the Middle East were refugees and no one came from the Middle East in those times, so it was essentially, by law, only people from communist countries,” Gibney said. “That was a way of showing a superiority of the American way of life as opposed to the Soviet.”

As a result, the U.S. was turning down asylum seekers from Central American countries plagued by brutal civil wars, including El Salvador and Honduras, Gibney said.

Even today, the majority of people who set foot in Fried’s office come from either Honduras, El Salvador or Guatemala.

“The stories that I hear from all three of those countries are just horrendous at how young they’re starting to recruit kids for the gangs and the methods that they go about doing that and the sexual violence,” Fried said.

Many refugees and immigrants throughout the state internalized yet more fear as a result of President Trump’s recent attempts to crack down on immigration.

“Back after the election, we did an analysis of our intakes in February and March and we were receiving 250 percent more calls for service than we had at the same time the year before,” Fried said.

This is due, Fried said, to the administration’s policies being unclear.

“With almost all of my clients, there’s that added layer of being afraid of ICE and getting deported and also that fear of just having to hide in the shadows a little bit and not knowing what tomorrow, next week, next month will look like,” Fried said.

For Phillips, it remains crucial that one does not merely reduce human beings to simple statistics.

“When we’re doing this job and when we’re doing federal government policy jobs, you tend to have to rely on numbers,” Phillips said. “We’re not talking about numbers. We’re talking about human beings and they’re looking for safe freedoms for their family.”

LOVELESS

music to be in as long as it speaks to them.

“Usually my favorite thing is the last thing I recorded. I’m sort of a jerk in that once I’ve recorded it, I’m sort of over it,” Loveless said. “I do hope people enjoy it, though.”

Judging by the crowd response at The Orange Peel and the praise of critics and fans, Loveless need not worry about whether or not her material is enjoyable.

“The song ‘Somewhere Else’ is a powerfully sad song, but its rock elements give it a good kick,” said Zach Diasio, freshman biology student.

“Her soulful voice is hard to deny.”

Despite her present success, fans are eager to know what the future — and an upcoming album release — holds for Loveless.

“I love recording albums, and I love doing shows. My favorite part of my career is not working a stupid fucking job,” Loveless said. “But the stuff I’m writing for the future is a lot darker than anything I’ve done before. Probably a bit more pop-y and quieter, too. So hopefully people won’t be too put off by that.”

Lydia Loveless’ new album *Boy Crazy and Single(s)* will be available Oct. 13.

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