

Building Skills in the Military

Tyrone Dumas of Portland has embarked on a Navy career serving as an Airman Apprentice with an elite group known as the "Flying Eagles."

Stationed in Lemoore, Calif., Dumas is an aviation electronic technician for Fighter Squadron 122, one of the Navy's most lethal and versatile strike fighter aircrafts, the F/A-18E/F Super Hornet.

"I like that the Navy has given me the opportunity to travel," said Dumas of his joys of serving.

"It's my job as senior airman



Navy Airman Tyrone Dumas of Portland.

to teach the new airman how we do things in the squadron," added Dumas. He went on to say he is very proud of his work as part of the squadron's 1,140-member team, helping to protect America on the world's oceans.

Bridging Cultures

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

Lee's accomplishments include serving IRCO for over 34 years in a multitude of leadership roles, most recently as associate director. He was key to providing culturally specific services in the development of IRCO's Asian Family Center and Africa House, and raising awareness of the need to address disparities in health, poverty, educational achievement, and access to community resources among communities of color.

As a former refugee himself, Lee embodies the vision of the organization's commitment to helping each immigrant and refugee family achieve their full potential in their new home.

When he takes office on April 1, Lee will face a changing picture for immigration and refugee issues.

"Policies around refugees have drastically changed," says Lee. "For example, during the late 70s, early 80s, as a refugee, you would be eligible for federal and state assistance for up to 38 months- cash and medical assistance, like the welfare programs offered in the United States. That is gone now. You can get at most 8 months now. Basically the policies say that within those 8 months you need to get a job and be able to support yourself and your family."

Lee also walks into a new

leadership role during a time when more and more unaccompanied minors are crossing into the United States on a regular basis.

"That's not something you saw as much 30 years ago," Lee says.

He says IRCO will have to continue to expand its services to the ever-changing face of immigration and refugees coming to the United States.

"That's the thing about this work; it's not always clear what the community will need next. We have English classes for the community, we have all of services that try to meet the needs of the populations we deal with, but it's always changing, and my hope is just to meet those needs and be prepared for what comes next."

Lee will succeed Sokhom Tauch who successfully led the organization for 19 years, expanding its capacity to serve diverse communities with a well-deserved reputation for accountability and innovation. Tauch will become a special advisor at IRCO to aid in the leadership transition.

For more information about the Immigration and Refugee Community Organization, as well as opportunities to volunteer with the organization, visit irco.org or call 503-234-1541. IRCO offices are located at 10301 N.E. Glisan St.



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