



International Institute of Connecticut, Inc.

CELEBRATING OVER **90** YEARS OF SERVICE TO NEW AMERICANS!

Main Office

670 Clinton Avenue
Bridgeport, CT 06605
Tel. (203) 336-0141
Fax. (203) 339-4400
Email: iiconn@aol.com
www.iiconn.org

Stamford

20 Forest St.
Stamford, CT 06901
Tel. (203) 965-7190
Fax. (203) 425-8927

Hartford

330 Main St., 3rd Floor
Hartford, CT 06106
Tel. (860) 692-3085
Fax. (860) 692-3089

Derby

30 Elizabeth Street
Derby, CT 06418
Tel. (203) 751-8696
Fax. (203) 736-4837

Sharon Kish
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Executive Director

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Dear Friend:

Imagine living in a world where the words you speak could mean the difference between sitting behind a big desk or looking down the business end of a gun. A frightening prospect, isn't it?

Freedom of speech is perhaps the most fundamental of human rights. Americans, especially, know and value the power of words. We live in a nation with a history of great orators and writers...individuals who fought injustice with little more than the strength of their voices and the skill of their pens.

We are lucky to live in such a society. Pierre (not his real name) was not. Born in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Pierre and his friends grew up in a broken system...a system that rewarded truth telling with oppression. Yet Pierre knew he had to speak out. So in early adulthood he joined the fight against the fraud and duplicity of his government. Pierre could only rely on the power of his words. Words that demanded transparency and justice.

Words that were met with arrest, torture and death threats.

Pierre was fortunate to escape the death sentence that hung over his head. He fled first to nearby Zambia and then to Thailand. His journey finally brought him to America, where, with the help of the International Institute, Pierre managed to reassemble the pieces of his life. Today, he has a job and is gaining credentials to resume his former occupation as a teacher. Most of all, he is looking forward to the day when his wife will be able to join him here.

Will you help us give others the same chance that we were able to give Pierre? Frankly, we cannot do it alone. Government funding allows us to buy about two months of food, clothing, housing and services for a family of four. It takes about six months for that same family to become entirely self-sufficient through wages earned. Your tax deductible contribution will enable the International Institute to continue to support refugees until they can support themselves.

Together, we can change a life forever. Help us continue giving hope to those who have all but lost theirs.

Please give as generously as you can. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Sharon Kish
President

Sharon A. Mackwell
Executive Director