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Seattle Authors Debut Children's Book on Immigration
***Davy Brown Discovers His Roots* puts a local spin on an all-American tale**

Seattle, WA—Unearth your immigration roots with Davy Brown, the 10-year-old Seattleite protagonist, of *Davy Brown Discovers His Roots*, which features several Seattle neighborhoods and cultural icons, and will debut on June 3 at the American Immigration Lawyers Association Annual Conference in Las Vegas.

Immigration roots run deep in America, especially in Seattle. Our children read manga, handle chopsticks with precision, celebrate Dia de los Muertos in school, and put salsa on their eggs. How quickly we can embrace these things as our own and fail to remember their foreign origin. Many of us share that same experience with our own immigration roots—they run so deep we can no longer see them under the generations of soil that have built up.

Authors Velani Mynhardt Witthöft and Keely Alexander of Keely Velani LLC tell the story of a young boy and his friends "look back" to find their immigrant roots in *Davy Brown Discovers His Roots*. Davy Brown is a bright, all-American boy with some not-so-typical problems. His best friend may be leaving the country. His teacher has just instructed the class to describe their own immigration stories-but his family doesn't have one-or so Davy thinks. In their search for their immigrant roots, Davy and his friends Carlos, Erika, and Amit discover that even the most seemingly typical people have exciting immigration histories.

While researching children's books on immigration, Witthöft and Alexander discovered that many immigration narratives tell immigration stories from a strictly historical or ethnic perspective, which sometimes leaves the reader with the feeling that he/she is on the outside looking in. Witthöft and Alexander's goal was to tell an accessible immigration story that includes everyone.

"We wanted to create a story that would blend the historic with the current to convey the message that we are all immigrants," Witthöft said. "Everyone has an immigration story—even you. Our hope is that by making the issue personal and relatable, we can create understanding and tolerance."

Davy Brown Discovers His Roots includes resources that enable readers to embark on their own voyage of discovery and can be read on many different levels. The book is easy enough for a child to understand but with enough substance to engage an adult reader. The story also features information on various types of visas and immigration paths—along with a handy reference guide.

The authors have teamed up with the American Immigration Law Foundation and a portion of the sales proceed will support their Curriculum Center's educational initiatives on immigration. Lesson plans and activities are available to educators and parents on both organization's websites and more will be available soon.

"In order for us to deal with a topic as heavy as immigration and get children excited to read about it, we needed to do something really different," said Alexander. "So we invented a new genre: the highly-visual middle grade book. It's a hybrid chapter picture book to appeal to a modern generation that enjoys graphic novels and the Internet. Our illustrations are technology-based and truly modern. Parents keep telling us how much Davy reminds them of their own children."



About the Authors

Withhöft is an immigrant from South Africa. She graduated from the University of Pretoria in 1999 with two law degrees and practiced bankruptcy law until 2002 when she moved to New York City. She worked for a financial magazine on Wall Street until 2004 when she and her husband moved to Seattle. She is currently employed by the Foundation for International Services where she works in comparative international education assisting immigration attorneys.

Alexander grew up in Western Montana. She attended the University of Montana in Missoula, where she received degrees in English-Literature and German. She has worked in the publishing industry, taught ESL and studied abroad. She now lives in Seattle with her husband and stepdaughter, and works in localization and the casual videogames industry.

About Keely Velani, LLC

Keely Velani LLC publishes children's books with a purpose. The books are designed to teach kids about global and social issues in a fun and novel way. When purchasing one of their books, kids not only will be educated on the issue featured in the book, but Keely Velani will contribute a portion of the proceeds to that specific cause to make a real difference. For the next two years Keely Velani will be dedicated to supporting AILF's Curriculum Center. Their next project will be on global warming; and after that that the issue the two will adopt is AIDS.

About the American Immigration Law Foundation (AILF)

AILF is a tax-exempt not-for-profit educational, charitable organization dedicated to increasing public understanding of the value of immigration to American society, and to advancing fundamental fairness and due process under the law for immigrants. The American Immigration Law Foundation's Curriculum Center serves as a national clearinghouse and resource for teaching immigration history and policy to grades K-12. The Curriculum Center sponsors the annual 5th Grade Creative Writing Contest, funds community and classroom service learning projects, provides training to educators to encourage innovative teaching techniques, and produces an annual resource guide that is distributed widely.