

For Immediate Release:
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200+ Organizations Signal Support for the Welcome Corps, New Service Opportunity for Private Refugee Sponsorship

U.S. government program aims to mobilize 10,000 Americans to welcome refugees through private sponsorship in 2023

Washington, D.C. — Today, more than 200 diverse organizations are signaling their support for the Welcome Corps, a new U.S. government community service program that allows everyday Americans to privately sponsor refugees from around the world—representing the boldest innovation in refugee resettlement in more than 40 years, grounded in the generosity and compassion of American communities.

Over the last year, Americans from every corner of the country have stepped up to welcome first Afghans, then Ukrainians, and then people in need of safety from our own hemisphere, including Venezuelans, Haitians, Cubans, and Nicaraguans. Now, with the launch of the Welcome Corps, the U.S. government is making it possible for Americans to sponsor refugees from all around the world. Many of these refugees have lived for decades in refugee camps worldwide, often unable to leave freely, earn a living, rebuild their lives—and make contributions—in the warm embrace of a new community.

“When Americans welcome, communities flourish. Newly arriving refugees have been forced to flee, leaving behind their communities and livelihoods, with some in search of a safe place to call home for years. Whether you are a business owner, teacher, stay-at-home parent, nurse, or store clerk, the Welcome Corps equips you with the resources you need to work together and share knowledge of your community with refugees as they adapt to life in America,” **said Sarah Krause, Executive Director and Co-founder of the Community Sponsorship Hub.**

“We know that Americans’ capacity to welcome is far greater than what our government can do alone. The Welcome Corps is the newest massive innovation in the refugee resettlement system that will make it possible for everyday Americans to do what we do best—be a good neighbor, a guide, and a friend to people finding their way in a new community,” **said Nazanin Ash, CEO of Welcome.US.**

“The United States has long been a humanitarian leader for those fleeing violence and persecution. With over 100 million people displaced worldwide, the launch of the Welcome Corps is a much-needed pathway to help additional people find safety through the American spirit of welcome. The International Rescue Committee is proud to support the launch of this effort and join Americans from all walks of life and across the nation to welcome refugees,” **said David Miliband, President and CEO of the International Rescue Committee.**

“We are thrilled to support the Welcome Corps as it expands the joy of sponsorship to new groups and communities across the United States and increases our nation’s capacity to

resettle refugees. The Welcome Corps builds upon a decades-long proud tradition of community sponsorship and local partnership in refugee resettlement. We look forward to more communities having the opportunity to experience the life-changing work of sponsorship by coming alongside new arrivals with the friendship and support they need to thrive,” **said Rick Santos, President and CEO of Church World Service.**

“The Welcome Corps is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to directly engage communities in the resettlement process and allow more refugees to find a safe place to call home. Creating a permanent private sponsorship program is a crucial and historical innovation in U.S. refugee admissions to increase capacity, strengthen communities, and deepen connections between new neighbors,” **said Becca Heller, Executive Director of the International Refugee Assistance Project.**

“Like the Peace Corps—created more than 60 years ago—the Welcome Corps is rooted in American principles of generosity, compassion, and volunteerism. The Welcome Corps Volunteers will help strengthen communities across America, while welcoming persecuted people from around the world and helping them start new lives,” **said Chris George, Director of Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services and former Peace Corps Volunteer.**

Through the Welcome Corps, Americans work in groups of at least five to welcome newcomers by securing and preparing initial housing, greeting refugee newcomers at the airport, enrolling children in school, and helping adults to find employment. Most importantly, they offer a sense of welcome, belonging, and inclusion for families that have left far more than their worldly goods behind—they have left behind friends, families, and the social networks that help us thrive. These shared acts of welcome bring communities together while making it easier for newcomers to adjust to life in the United States. The program aims to mobilize at least 10,000 Americans in 2023 to welcome refugees through private sponsorship.

Leaders from across the resettlement, faith, service, and government communities are voicing their strong support for this bold new program that will dramatically expand America’s ability to welcome newcomers.

“HIAS welcomes the Welcome Corps! In 2021, with the mass evacuation of Afghans, HIAS was the first resettlement agency to augment network capacity through ‘welcome circles,’ partnering with American synagogues to receive Afghans and, later, Ukrainians. We were, however, troubled that these newcomers entered the U.S. as temporary ‘parolees’—without the legal protections enjoyed by refugees, such as pathways to family reunion and a green card. The Welcome Corps solves that problem by allowing groups outside of traditional resettlement networks to receive refugees with peace of mind—with pathways to family unity, green cards, and citizenship. A welcome development,” **said Mark Hetfield, President and CEO of HIAS.**

“Colorado welcomes newcomers from around the world, and I am proud of how Coloradans have stepped up to support those seeking refuge and freedom. The Welcome Corps will create a permanent pathway for Americans to sponsor newcomers from around the world, making it easier for those who wish to help refugees and enabling newcomers to learn about their new community from those who know it best. While we continue to call on Congress to secure our borders and pass comprehensive immigration reform, this new program provides a path to safety for many people,” **said Colorado Governor Jared Polis.**

“As active and engaged changemakers within the communities we serve, Rotary’s members see how war, natural disasters, and civil unrest are among the many forces driving millions of people from their homes, communities, and countries. Our global network supports refugee resettlement in ways that meet local needs. Our U.S.-based Rotary members are continuing these efforts through collaboration with Welcome.US to help Ukrainians and Afghans seeking refuge in the United States, and we applaud the call for expanded private support to welcome all newcomers,” **said John Hewko, General Secretary and CEO of Rotary International.**

“Ensuring newly-arrived refugees thrive in their new communities requires sustained community involvement and cooperation across governments, community leaders, non-profit organizations, and the private sector. We are thankful for the efforts of the U.S. government and [Welcome.US](#) in supporting a sponsorship program that will allow more Americans to welcome refugees with open arms, and [Airbnb.org](#) will continue to invest in its partners to help bridge the critical gap in housing needs for newcomers,” **said Joe Gebbia, Co-founder of Airbnb and Chairman of Airbnb.org.**

“LGBTQI+ people are facing increasing persecution around the world, and LGBTQI+ persons seeking refuge have a critical need for networks of support throughout the process of resettlement. The Welcome Corps represents a major step in the Biden administration’s goal of advancing LGBTQI+ rights worldwide. Rainbow Railroad is excited about this program, which will empower communities of care across the United States to support LGBTQI+ people at risk,” **said Dr. Kimahli Powell, CEO of Rainbow Railroad.**

Applications for the Welcome Corps will be accepted beginning January 19, 2023. **Americans interested in learning more about sponsorship should visit [WelcomeCorps.org](#).**

The Welcome Corps was launched by the Department of State’s Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM), and is being implemented by a consortium of six organizations with expertise in refugee resettlement, protection, and welcome. Led by the Community Sponsorship Hub, the consortium includes Church World Service/Refugee Welcome Collective, Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services (IRIS), International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP), International Rescue Committee (IRC), and Welcome.US.

Refugee newcomers who arrive through the Welcome Corps will follow an established government process that includes extensive security vetting and health checks. They will have refugee status, employment authorization, access to key public benefits like health insurance, and can eventually apply for U.S. citizenship. The Welcome Corps program provides sponsor groups with access to tools and resources, including a budget template, fundraising support, an arrival checklist, and ongoing guidance throughout the initial sponsorship period.

[A full list of the organizations expressing support for the Welcome Corps is available here.](#)

#AfghanEvac

Afghan-American Foundation (AAF)

Afghan-American Women Association (A-AWA)

Afghan American Muslim Outreach (AAMO)

Afghan Community Culture Center, Inc. (ACCC)

Afghanistan Youth Relief Foundation (AYRF)

Airbnb.org
Alianta
Alight
Alianza Americas
Amaanah Refugee Services
American Immigration Council (AIC)
American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA)
American Muslim Women Association of Arizona (AMWA)
American Red Cross
American Service
Amnesty International USA
An Nisa Hope Center
Armenian National Committee of America-Western Region (ANCA-Western Region)
AsylumWorks
Bach Viet Association of Sacramento
Bethany Christian Services
Blue Star Families
Boat People SOS
Building Peaceful Bridges (BPB)
California Immigrants Resources Center
Catholic Charities USA
Catholic Charities Boston
Center for Empowering Refugees and Immigrants
Center for Migration Studies of New York
Chicago Refugee Coalition
Church World Service
Claremont Canopy
Combined Arms
Community Agenda for Regained Empowerment
Community Sponsorship Hub
Concordia
Connecticut for Ukraine Refugee Matching Program
Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)
Culture of Health-Advancing Together (CHAT)
Culturingua
Della Lamb Community Services
Diocese of Olympia Refugee Resettlement Office
Dream.Org
Eagle Online Academy
ECHO Collective
Elena's Light
Ethiopian Community Development Council (ECDC)
ETS
Evacuate Our Allies
Every Campus A Refuge (ECAR)
Exodus World Service
FAMIL
Five Together Foundation
Florida Immigrant Coalition, Inc. (FLIC)
Fresh Start Refugee Assistance Center
Friendly House, Inc.

Fugees Family
Give an Hour
Global Emergency Response and Assistance (GERA)
Globally
Glocally Connected — Human Migration Institute
GoFundMe.org
Good360
Goodwill Industries International
Guilford College
Haitian Bridge Alliance
Hanan Refugees Relief Group
Hazara American Association, Inc.
Hearts & Homes for Refugees
Heartfelt Tidbits
Hello Neighbor
HIAS
Home For Refugees USA
Homes Not Borders
Houston Immigration Legal Services Collaborative
Human Rights First
ICNA Relief USA
Immigrant ARC
Immigrant & Refugee Outreach Center
Immigrant Welcome Center
Indy Reads
Institute of International Education (IIE)
International Catholic Migration Commission
International Neighbors
International Rescue Committee (IRC)
International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP)
Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA)
IRIS – Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services
Islamic Center of Boise
Islamic Relief USA
Jesuit Refugee Service/USA
Jewish Family Service of Metrowest
Jewish Federations of North America
JCRC of Greater Washington
Jubilee Campaign USA
Keeping Our Promise Inc.
Kids in Need of Defense (KIND)
Kyiv-Mohyla Foundation of America
Lions International
Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service
Manor College
Mayors Migration Council
Migration and Refugee Services/USCCB
Miles4Migrants
MIRA: Middle Eastern Immigrant and Refugee Alliance
Muslim Family Services of Colorado

Milwaukee Muslim Women's Coalition
Muslim Youth for Positive Impact
MY Project USA
National Association of System Heads (NASH)
National Coalition Supporting Eurasian Jewry (NCSEJ)
National Immigration Forum
National Partnership for New Americans (NPNA)
National Restaurant Association
Neighbors For Refugees
New American Association of Massachusetts
New American Leaders
New England Arab American Organization
Niskanen Center
No One Left Behind
Noor Islamic and Cultural Community Center
North Carolina African Services Coalition (NCASC)
NOVA Friends of Refugees
Nova Ukraine
Olive Branch Muslim Family Services
One Journey
ORAM – Organization for Refuge, Asylum and Migration
Orange County Jewish Coalition for Refugees
Oxfam America
Pairity
Pars Equality Center
Partnership for the Advancement of New Americans (PANA)
Peace Corps Community for Refugees
Pernet Family Health Service
Pima Community College
Plast, Ukrainian Scouting Organization – USA
Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration
Project Worthmore
Rainbow Railroad
Razom for Ukraine
REACT DC
RefugePoint
Refugee Advocacy Lab
Refugee Assistance Alliance
Refugee Assistance Partners NJ
Refugee Congress
Refugee Council USA (RCUSA)
Refugee Education & Adventure CHallenge (REACH)
Refugee Welcome Collective
Refugee Women Rising
Refugees International
Restore Her Voice
Returned Peace Corps Volunteers Alliance for Ukraine
Riverview International Center
Rocky Mountain Welcome Center
Rotary International
Ruth's Refuge

Sanctuary Kitchen by CitySeed
Save Our Allies
Seven Hills Foundation
Slavic Refugee and Immigrant Service Organisation
Soft Landing Missoula
Soldiers' Angels
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)
Special Olympics
Spring Institute for Intercultural Learning
Starting Point for Refugee Children
Syrian Community Network (SCN)
Tahirih
Talent Beyond Boundaries
Tapestry Farms
Tarjimly
Tennessee Resettlement Aid
Texas International Education Consortium
The Independence Fund
The Islamic Association of Raleigh
The Refugee Response
The Selfreliance Association
The Shapiro Foundation
The University of Tulsa
Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS)
Treetops Collective
Tulsa Metropolitan Ministry
Ukraine Immigration Task Force
Ukrainian American Bar Association
Ukrainian American Cultural Center of NJ
Ukrainian American House
Ukrainian American Youth Association
Ukrainian Community Center of Washington
Ukrainian Educational and Cultural Center (UECC)
Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA
Union for Reform Judaism
United Afghan Association
United Ukrainian American Relief Committee
United Way of Central Massachusetts
United Stateless
University of Maryland, College Park
Upwardly Global
USAHello
Utah Muslim Civic League
U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants
Valley Neighbors of the Flathead
Vecina
Veterans for American Ideals (VFAI)
Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)
Vietnamese American NonGovernmental Organization (VANGO) Network
Viets for Afghans
VOICE (Vietnamese Overseas Initiative for Conscience Empowerment)

Water for Ishmael
We Are All America
We Welcome
Welcome Neighbor STL
WelcomeNST
Welcome.US
Welcoming America
With Honor Action
Women for Afghan Women (WAW)
World Education Services
World Learning
World Relief
World University Service of Canada (WUSC)
YMCA of the USA