

# Supporting Higher Education in Refugee Resettlement



## BRINGING THE WORLD TO CAMPUS THROUGH REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT – OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENT SERVICE

October 24, 2024

Funded by the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration

# Supporting Higher Education in Refugee Resettlement

## ABOUT SHERR

**Purpose:** Increase higher ed engagement in resettlement, with the larger aim of growing and strengthening the domestic capacity for placement of refugees in communities across the U.S.

- Expanding and coordinating a network of higher education institutions across the U.S. committed to engagement in refugee resettlement
- Identifying 'pathways of engagement' and supporting partnerships between higher ed and resettlement organizations
- Designing and coordinating toolkits, curricula, briefings, webinars, virtual trainings and communities of practice and action.



# Supporting Higher Education in Refugee Resettlement

## TODAY'S SPEAKERS



Jessica Chapman  
Refugee Welcome Collective



Dr. Stephaine Aubry  
The Ohio State University



Matt Johnson  
Church World Service



Laura Wagner  
Presidents' Alliance on Higher  
Education and Immigration



Lisa Wolfe  
The Ware Institute for Civic  
Engagement, Franklin & Marshall  
College



Kate Waidler  
International Institute of New  
England

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## **BRINGING THE WORLD TO CAMPUS THROUGH REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT – OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENT SERVICE**

- ✓ Understand opportunities for service learning /community engaged learning in the context of refugee resettlement
- ✓ Learn about the value of refugee-focused service-learning and volunteer programs for campuses and their students
- ✓ Discover resources that are available to support partnerships between higher education institutions and refugee resettlement

Supporting Higher Education in  
**Refugee Resettlement**

**BRINGING THE WORLD TO CAMPUS THROUGH REFUGEE  
RESETTLEMENT – OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENT SERVICE**

# **CONTEXT ABOUT VOLUNTEERING WITH REFUGEES**

**Speaker: Jessica Chapman**

Director, Refugee Welcome Collective

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and immigrants  
since 1983





**Refugee Welcome**  
**Collective**

# Refugee Welcome Collective

Building Capacity for Community  
Engagement in Refugee Welcome

[refugeewelcome.org](https://refugeewelcome.org)

Refugee Welcome Collective is a project of CWS under an agreement paid for by the U.S. Department of State.

## Training



- Live training (in-person and virtual)
- Off-the-shelf training, such as courses offered through RWC Online Learning

## Program Supports



- Guides
- Toolkits
- Manuals
- WelcomeWorks



## Technical Assistance (TA)



### TA sessions for

- Community sponsorship staff (national and local)
- Case managers
- Sponsors
- Refugees paired with sponsors

## Knowledge Sharing

- Monthly Lunch and Learn webinars
- Sounding Board Social Learning Spaces
- RWC Membership: community of practice that meets quarterly



# Context



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- ❖ Millions of people are displaced worldwide.
- ❖ Globally, less than 1% of refugees are considered for resettlement.
- ❖ The U.S. historically accepts a significant portion of resettled refugees, often more than any other country.

## Challenges faced by refugees during resettlement:

- Language barriers
- Cultural adjustment
- Economic integration
- Social isolation

**Host communities** play an important role in successful resettlement.





# Value of volunteering with refugees



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## For Refugees

- Accelerates integration process
- Provides crucial local knowledge and connections
- Offers emotional support and friendship
- Enhance language learning opportunities

## For Volunteers:

- Builds cross-cultural understanding
- Develops empathy and global perspective
- Acquires new skills (e.g., intercultural communication)
- Creates meaningful community connections



# Impact of volunteer engagement



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## On Refugees:

- Improved employment outcomes
- Better educational integration for children
- Increased sense of belonging in new community
- Enhanced overall well-being

## On Communities:

- Fosters more inclusive and diverse societies
- Breaks down stereotypes and misconceptions
- Strengthens local support networks
- Enriches cultural fabric of the community



# Ways to engage



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Refugees come to the United States through the United States **Refugee Admission Program (USRAP)** (FY24 = 100,034 arrivals).

They are resettled either through the **Reception and Placement (R&P)** program or through the **Welcome Corps** Program.

Both the Reception and Placement and Welcome Corps programs offer opportunities for volunteer engagement.





# Ways to Engage Cont.



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## Reception and Placement (R&P)

- 10 National Resettlement Agencies
- More than 370 local resettlement offices across U.S.
- Each national and local office have their own volunteer engagement programs
  - **One off** (home set-ups or holiday gatherings)
  - **Volunteer programs** (youth programs, English Language, tutoring)
  - **Partnerships with universities** (language classes, mentorship programs, student volunteer programs, short-term housing, access to facilities, **Every Campus a Refuge**)
  - **Co-sponsorship** (hand in hand)
    - Group of five
    - Support with key resettlement activities

## Welcome Corps

- Group of five, apply online to be certified to participate in program, either matched or name someone they know.
- Provide all resettlement services with support from a “Private Sponsor Organization.”
- Welcome Corps on Campus
  - Campuses can form a Private Sponsor Group





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Collective**

MM/DD/YY

# Join, Contribute, Welcome!

Refugee Welcome Collective

[refugeewelcome.org](https://refugeewelcome.org)

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## Supporting Higher Education in Refugee Resettlement

### OVERVIEW OF WAYS HEIS ARE ENGAGING

- Professor or course partnership with a resettlement agency
- Co-sponsorship
- Student Organizations
- Internships, Fellowships, Federal Work Study





# Spanish in Ohio

Spanish in Ohio is a community-based learning course where students complete 50 hours of service in local Latine communities. In class, we discuss the ethics of community-based learning and the history of immigration policies in the U.S.

With the generous support of World Learning, we are creating a General Education version of this course taught in English. Students will collaborate with newcomer communities with ties to countries outside of Latin America and will learn from experts in refugee resettlement.

Image: Our students volunteer with Hispanic Heritage Month events, including our annual parade in Columbus, Ohio







# CWS AND F&M INITIATIVES



## F&M Action for Refugee Resettlement (FARR)

FARR is a student club dedicated to supporting refugee resettlement efforts—Ex: Human Library events, Managing volunteer engagement, Friendsgiving.



## Community-Based Learning (CBL) Classes

Open Doors/Closed Borders is a government class in which students explore the concept of citizenship and the challenges of losing citizenship by working with recently resettled refugees. Groups choose from campus engagement, research/resource mapping, or direct service projects. —Ex: LGBTQ resources, Trauma-informed therapy resources, housing navigation support.



## Other Projects

Individual student interns work with CWS and are paid by F&M with support from the Federal Work-Study program. CWS and F&M received a grant from SHERR to explore ECAR and build infrastructure to support CBL classes in our Forced Migration Certificate program.



# The International Institute of New England: Partnering with Higher Education



- Co-Sponsorship
- Digital Literacy Workshops
- ESOL Tutoring
- Cultural Orientation
- Employment Support
- Designing Research Tools
- Housing Support

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# **BRINGING THE WORLD TO CAMPUS THROUGH REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT – OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENT SERVICE**

## **PANEL DISCUSSION**

**Moderator/Speaker: Laura Wagner**

Director, Refugee Student Initiatives

Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration (SHERR consortium partner)



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# BRINGING THE WORLD TO CAMPUS THROUGH REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT – OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENT SERVICE

## QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

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# **BRINGING THE WORLD TO CAMPUS THROUGH REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT – OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENT SERVICE**

## **SUMMARY OF RESOURCES**

**Speaker: Laura Wagner**

Director, Refugee Student Initiatives

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# Supporting Higher Education in Refugee Resettlement

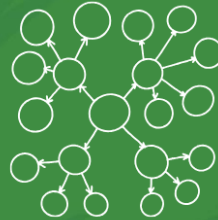
## REFUGEE RESOURCE HUB



Pathways of  
Engagement



Spotlights & Models



Eco-system  
of Orgs



Directory &  
Networks



Contextual Info on  
Refugee Resettlement



<https://www.higheredimmigrationportal.org/communities/refugee-hub/>

# Supporting Higher Education in Refugee Resettlement

## REFUGEE RESOURCE HUB SPOTLIGHTS & MODELS

### Russell Sage College's Intercultural Café: a welcoming and inclusive environment for practicing English conversation skills



The Intercultural Café at Russell Sage College is a welcoming and inclusive environment designed for those wishing to practice their English conversation skills. Learners are invited to the Café to enjoy tea and refreshments, meet college students, and practice conversation skills. Learners prepare for the American citizenship exam and practice English grammar, reading, writing, and basics. The Café provides an enriching environment for English language learners and college students to facilitate multicultural interactions, meaningful connections, and lasting memories.

#### In this Article:

1. Purpose for the Program
2. Key to the Success of the Program
3. Key Actors and Participants
4. Impact and Outcomes
5. Implementation Steps
6. Challenges Faced
7. Resources and Partnerships
8. Looking to the Future
9. Contact and Additional Resources





**Refugee Welcome Collective**  
**Welcoming refugees  
through community  
sponsorship**

[Learn More](#)



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**WELCOME.US**

# AHLAN

A Manual for Establishing  
Resettlement Campuses  
Together



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# Supporting Higher Education in Refugee Resettlement

## CONSIDER JOINING THE WELCOME CAMPUS NETWORK

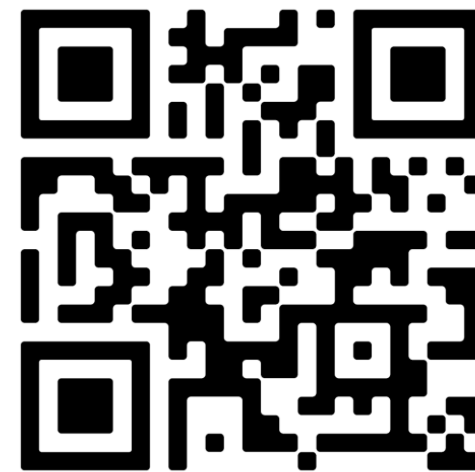


### WELCOME CAMPUS NETWORK

The Welcome Campus Network amplifies the work of colleges and universities in welcoming and supporting newcomers who are seeking safety from across the globe.



If interested in joining the Welcome Campus Network, visit our website and complete the membership form! (Membership is free.)



[Welcome.us/more-ways-to-help/welcome-campus-network](https://welcome.us/more-ways-to-help/welcome-campus-network)

## NEXT STEPS

- ✓ Map your campus and community for needs and opportunities
- ✓ Connect with local **resettlement office** OR connect with the **community engagement office** at a local college or university
- ✓ Set up a meeting with a member of the SHERR team

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registration information or email us at  
[SHERR@worldlearning.org](mailto:SHERR@worldlearning.org)

**Housing**

*Campus Housing for Refugees (November 13, 2024)*

**Refugee Health**

*Higher Education Partnerships in Refugee Health (December 5, 2024)*

**Educational Opportunities**

*Enrolling and Supporting Resettled Refugee Students (January 22, 2025)*

**English Language Learning and Career Pathways**

*Supporting Refugees with English Language Learning and Career  
Pathways (February 12, 2025)*



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# THANK YOU!

SHERR email address for questions and communications:

[SHERR@worldlearning.org](mailto:SHERR@worldlearning.org)