

Welcoming
Initiative *for*
Newcomers

2025

ANNUAL REPORT

A YEAR OF
GRIT, GROWTH,
AND INNOVATION



A LETTER FROM OUR CEO



KATE CLARK, ESQ.
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

2025 was many things. It was the Welcoming Initiative for Newcomers (WIN)'s inaugural year in operation — full of grit, growth, and innovation.

We met unexpected bright spots that lived alongside immeasurable heartache.

Through it all, WIN led with ecosystem partners to help extend and increase our collective impact at a formative period in our history. We filled critical gaps and empowered partner organizations and sponsors across America to continue serving.

2025 started with what we thought was a final push to welcome newcomers as we braced for sweeping policy changes that would effectively shut the door to the most vulnerable. The policies arrived, and overnight the entire refugee resettlement ecosystem came to a standstill.

And then, just hours after, we received panicked, unexpected calls from Afghan Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) holders able to lawfully enter the U.S. — but they couldn't because of the decimated infrastructure.

Leveraging the determination and trust of [The Shapiro Foundation](#) and WIN's prior experience implementing a privately supported welcoming model, we quickly

assembled a reconfigured coalition of partners, the Afghan Allies Safe Arrival Initiative, to guide the safe arrival of Afghan SIV holders.

Over the course of 12 months, we welcomed more than 1,103 Afghans.

WIN's work to welcome Afghan newcomers led to several opportunities to deepen immigrant integration by:

- Launching and co-leading, with the [Community Sponsorship Hub](#), support for newcomers with intensive case management needs via the Office of Refugee Resettlement Preferred Communities Program.
- Empowering newcomers, sponsors, and partners with critical legal information and the latest policy changes that helped orient and guide them to important next steps.

WIN moved fast with a learner's mindset and commitment to curiosity in the constantly evolving environment.

Early in the year, after taking notice of signals from Executive Order

14163, "Realigning the United States Refugee Admissions Program," that indicated states would take on more of a prominent role for resettlement, WIN co-led, with [The Shapiro Foundation](#) and [World Education Services](#) (WES), a series of convenings alongside State Refugee Coordinators.

We learned a lot and have just scratched the surface.

Nine months later, as we closed 2025, that convening work continued. In 2026, WIN will humbly be at the helm — with key partners — surveying the states for their readiness to lead a potential new refugee resettlement framework.

In between, WIN's travel support continued, **helping 1,135 newcomers to reach safety** in the U.S. and across the globe. Our success in providing travel support came from generous travel grants and loyalty point donations.

WIN will not back down from the challenges and obstacles to come. We will continue being solutions-oriented and centered on creating win-win-win solutions for newcomers, sponsors, and our communities. As we navigate the opportunities the future brings us, we deeply appreciate your support in the journey.



ED SHAPIRO
BOARD CHAIR

FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR

In the summer of 2024, when Kate, my colleague Larry Tobin and I first started discussing the idea of creating the organization which ultimately would become WIN, none of us could have imagined how significantly the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) would change during our first year of operations. What I did know was that I wanted to support newcomers immediately, and at the same time work with government, non-profit and private sector partners to help build a longer-term resettlement/sponsorship ecosystem.

During our first year of operations, under Kate's dynamic leadership, WIN has been able to directly affect the lives of thousand of newcomers and sponsors impacted by government transitions and dramatic changes in the funding environment. At the same time, WIN has positioned itself as a key player working with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) supporting the redesign of the USRAP.

I am grateful for our partners' trust and continued collaboration, as everything we have accomplished has been a testament to the formative partnerships we have cultivated in the resettlement ecosystem in the U.S. and across the globe.

The work ahead is critical and involves reimagining welcoming systems with the ultimate goal of enabling an infrastructure that includes economic and state-specific priorities in the immigration process. Together we can create solutions that drive WINning outcomes for newcomers, employers/sponsors, and the communities welcoming them.

AFGHAN SUPPORT



Recognizing the urgency and need to support our Afghan allies, all of whom have bravely risked their lives to support U.S. missions, to lawfully and safely arrive in the U.S., **WIN formed a coordinated welcoming network of partners, the Afghan Allies Safe Arrival Initiative, to provide comprehensive intake, case management, zero percent travel loans, travel coordination, and sponsorship.**

Together, from the moment our partners received a referral, our network thoughtfully triaged each case's needs and coordinated a supported welcome to connect our Afghan allies with their loved ones, networks of care, or community sponsorship groups.

From January through December, the network worked together to expand and streamline the process to serve Afghan allies. **Most of the referrals were families and many had to flee on numerous occasions** to find temporary safe haven in places like Turkey, Pakistan, France, England, Japan, Germany, Tajikistan, Malaysia, Canada, Doha, and Albania.

WIN SUPPORTED

877 individuals with travel coordination using 26,764,715 donated airline miles valued at \$376,664

163 cases with humanitarian loan assistance totaling more than \$744,419 in funds



WINPACT IN ACTION

"I am grateful and humbled to be standing here, on this soil, in these halls of history speaking to you. My children will go far in this country. They will learn, they will contribute, and they will faithfully serve their community."

— FARHAD, AFGHAN SIV HOLDER,
ADDRESSING MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

Farhad, his wife, four daughters, and son arrived safely in the U.S. on February 11, 2025, thanks to the incredible efforts of WIN and many partner organizations.

Farhad first applied for his Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) in 2018. Finally, at the end of January 2025, the visa was issued. Initially, he was overjoyed to hear the news, but that quickly turned to fear when he realized the programs that had been in place to travel us to the U.S. had been stopped. Without resources to buy tickets for his family they were stranded in danger. Farhad shared, **"I am incredibly grateful for the generosity of strangers who stepped up to fund the rescue operation to pull me and my family out of hostile land."**

While waiting for their SIVs to be approved, Farhad's family faced near-constant harassment and fear of danger. As a result, his family remained indoors, essentially hiding.

This meant a gap in education for his children. **"We were put in this extremely untenable position because of my choice to partner with the U.S. I do not regret this for one second."**

In March 2025, **weeks after arriving in the U.S., Farhad joined WIN and partners to brief Members of Congress at the Capitol** to share his harrowing journey and the need for continued support from the U.S. for SIVs. Farhad shared his story was not unique and there were many more families still in need of support:

"This is a wider story, a deeper story about a people who have protected America's troops with their commitment and loyalty. This is about a people who are now threatened, afraid, and hanging on to the only hope they have — the hope of the American promise made to wartime allies. The question is this: Do our lives matter? Do our daughters matter? Does our sacrifice matter?"

WIN TRAVEL: INTERNATIONAL & DOMESTIC

INTERNATIONAL

Through a combination of travel loans, grants and leveraging donated airline points and miles, WIN supported the safe arrival of 1,135 newcomers across the globe.

877 Afghan Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) holders from 22 countries to the U.S.

55 refugee students from Afghanistan to Malta and Albania

26 refugee students from Afghanistan, Ukraine, and Syria to Japan

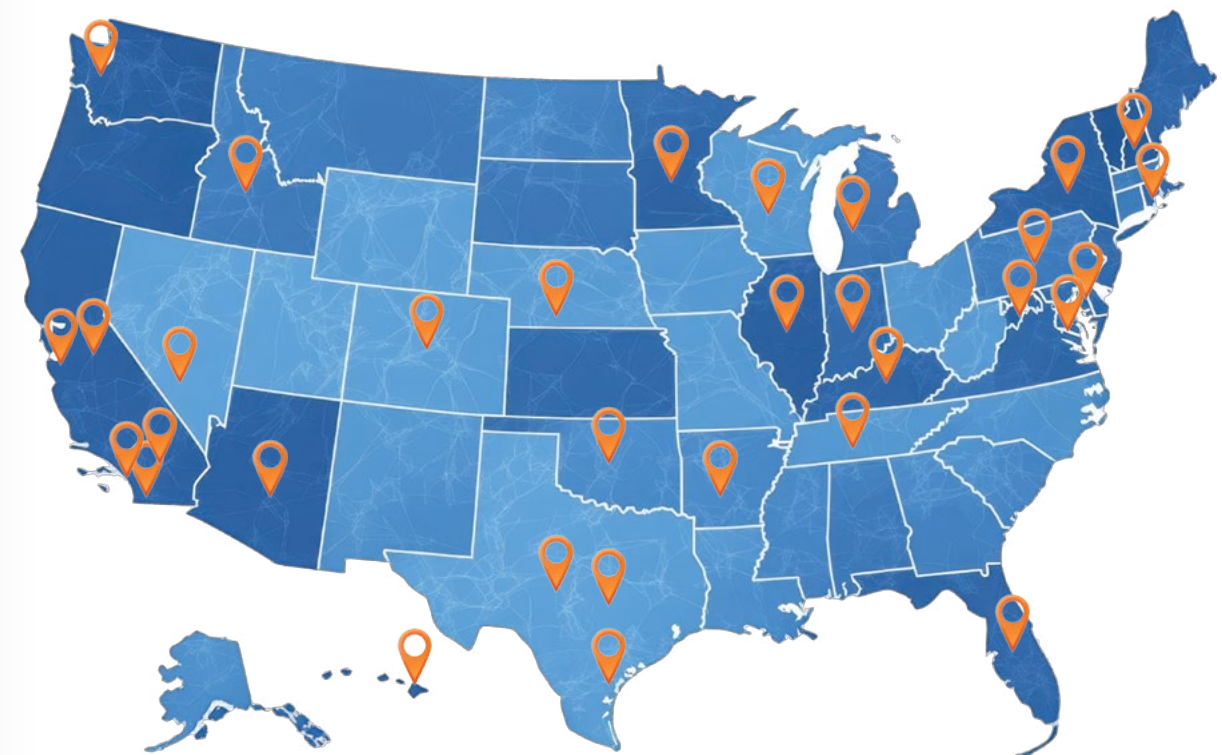
72 newcomers from Colombia and Guatemala to the U.S.



DOMESTIC

45 DACA recipients from across the U.S. who had been granted advanced parole

69 refugee students from Syria, South Sudan, Sudan, Somalia, Burundi, and Iraq who were accepted to universities across the U.S.



IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION

Over the course of the year, the WIN team provided legal empowerment support to more than 2,111 individuals.

LEGAL EMPOWERMENT

At a time when demand for legal services far exceeded the national capacity, it was important for WIN to lean in to providing critical legal information. We empowered newcomers, sponsors, and partners with knowledge to make informed decisions.



1,288 NEWCOMERS RECEIVED LEGAL INFORMATION PRESENTATIONS

- 14 Know Your Rights presentations
- 13 Policy Update presentations
- 9 Applying for Green Card presentations



1,061 SPONSORS RECEIVED LEGAL INFORMATION PRESENTATIONS

- 13 Know Your Rights presentations
- 12 Policy Update presentations
- 9 Applying for Green Card presentations



124 NEWCOMERS RECEIVED PRO BONO LEGAL ASSISTANCE

- 113 Legal consults conducted
- 107 Cases accepted for full representation
- 4 Newcomers received pro se assistance



13 PARTNERS RECEIVED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TRAININGS AND SUPPORT

- 19 Legal Empowerment & Advocacy Support trainings
- 9 Technical Assistance trainings



PREFERRED COMMUNITIES PROGRAM

WIN and its close partner the [Community Sponsorship Hub](#) (CSH) were selected to administer the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) Preferred Communities Program.

At a time where critical integration support was needed more than ever, WIN and CSH filled a critical gap as a replacement grantee of the former programming offered by the Episcopal Migration Ministries. Over the course FY25, WIN and CSH will co-lead a first of its kind approach to center sponsorship and case management for refugees with the most urgent and complex needs.

Our partners in five high-need locations were able to continue their important work serving 470 newcomers:

- DWELL | Mobile, Alabama
- REACT DC | Greater Washington, D.C.
- Interfaith Works Central New York | Syracuse, NY
- Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston | Houston, Texas
- Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest | Tuscon, Arizona

WIN and CSH partnered to provide virtual support for 140 newcomers located across the country.



Our goal was simple:
Increase individual participation in community sponsorship across the U.S. and help more refugees access long-term integration support.



STATE-CENTRIC REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT

Federal Agencies were directed to propose reforms granting states greater input in refugee resettlement.

On January 20, 2025, the Administration issued Executive Order 14163, "Realigning the United States Refugee Admissions Program," halting refugee arrivals and directing federal agencies to propose reforms that grant states greater input in refugee resettlement. Indeed, the U.S. government signaled its intent to evolve the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) to a state-centric framework.

Over the course of 2025, WIN alongside [The Shapiro Foundation](#) (TSF) and [World Education Services](#) (WES), and in partnership with the State Coordinators of Refugee Resettlement (SCORR), separately convened several state refugee coordinators to discuss this emerging model, while also gaining perspectives from other stakeholder groups.

We heard feedback from stakeholders that having a convenor and thought partner during the anticipated transition to a state-centric USRAP model has been helpful. We are pleased to be in service of this effort and hopeful to continue and expand the role we've been playing in coordination with the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Refugee Resettlement, with WIN in the lead, drawing on in-kind expertise from WES and TSF in 2026.

We intend to approach this work with deep respect for the experience across the field and within states and local communities; we see our role as centered on listening, learning, and bringing together insights to inform recommendations and the way forward.



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SUPPORTERS

- Thank you to our generous 2025 supporters:
- Community Sponsorship Hub*
 - Five Together Foundation
 - IRC Center for Economic Opportunity*
 - Jewish Family Service of San Diego*
 - John & Colleen Boselli
 - Michael Pham
 - Rachel Grassi
 - The Shapiro Foundation
 - United Airlines

**indicates sub-grant*



HOW YOU CAN HELP

Your tax-deductible donation support WIN's innovative and impactful work:

Federal EIN: 33-1862161

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