



New Arrivals Institute Annual Report

2024

Website www.newarrivalsinstitute.org

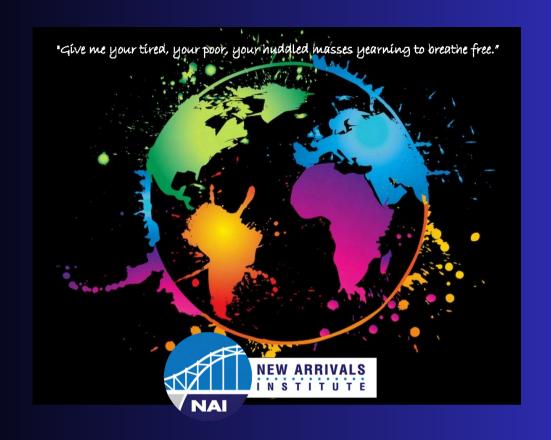




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Executive Message

The year 2024 has been a whirlwind for refugee and immigrant services. Between a highly charged election atmosphere and crises around the world pushing more than 122.6 million people out of their homes we have been very busy. In 2024, NAI served more than 1,500 refugees and immigrants across NC.

When New Arrivals Institute opened its doors in 2011 with 3 full time and 2 part time staff members, I never dreamed we would expand not only our services beyond English and Childcare in Greensboro but our staff to 38 incredible individuals. Each day we see about 150 clients accessing services and had to add 2 additional employees for our childcare program. We also offer a robust array of online/remote services for those who cannot get to our office.

share

Leilani Roughton

Executive Director

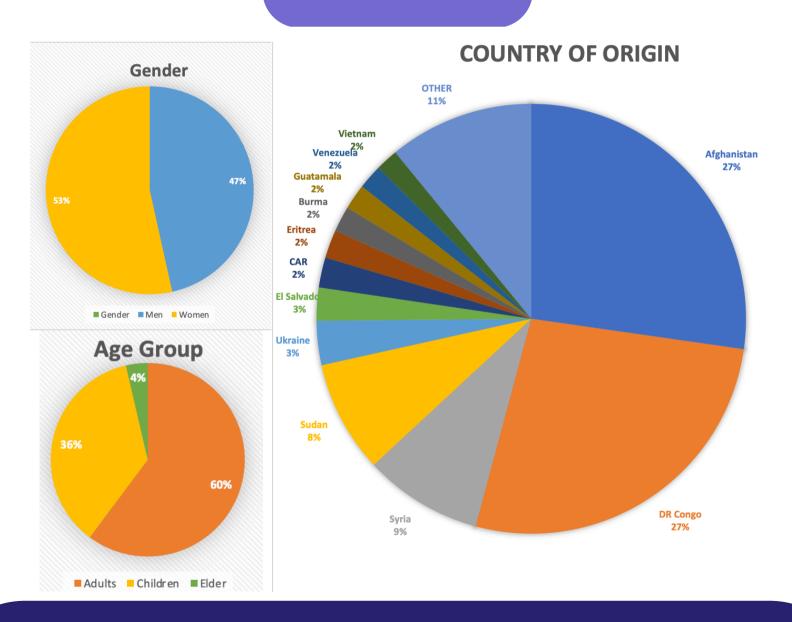
One of the things I am proudest of is that New Arrivals Institute is not just somewhere to get needed services. It is a community of people that works together as they strive to reach self-sufficiency. One only has to look outside to see women from all over the world sitting on benches around a tree talking, laughing, and sharing food with one another during a break in classes. Or men congregating in the parking lot to catch up with one another. When you go to the outdoor learning environment children are playing across culture and language finding joy in just being together. Our refugee and immigrant clients have survived so much and come so far to find safety and peace and I am so proud of their hard work and dedication to self, family, and community.

As we look towards 2025, we are preparing for possible changes in funding and support but, even so, we are committed to serving NC's refugee and immigrant population and finding ways to continue building a community that welcomes refugees and immigrants and provides them with the tools they need to achieve their goals.

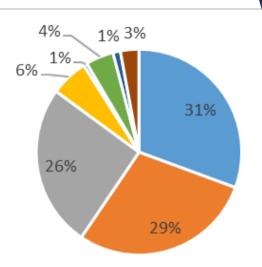
Board Message

NAI's 2024 was a year of growth and change at our agency and as a nation. We, as NAI's Board of Directors, have been stalwart in our work to make NC a place that welcomes refugees and Immigrants. We provide them with the tools they need to achieve their goals. As a board and as individuals, we spent more time than ever before with staff, listening to them and observing the incredible work they do. As we look towards 2025, we are steadfast in our pledge to guide and support NAI in meeting the challenges ahead as they continue to serve our refugee and immigrant neighbors.

Client Statistics

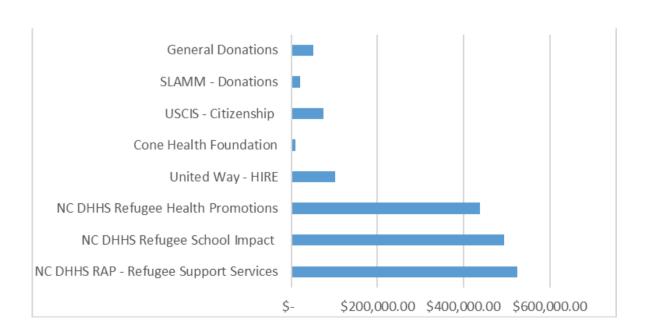


Funding

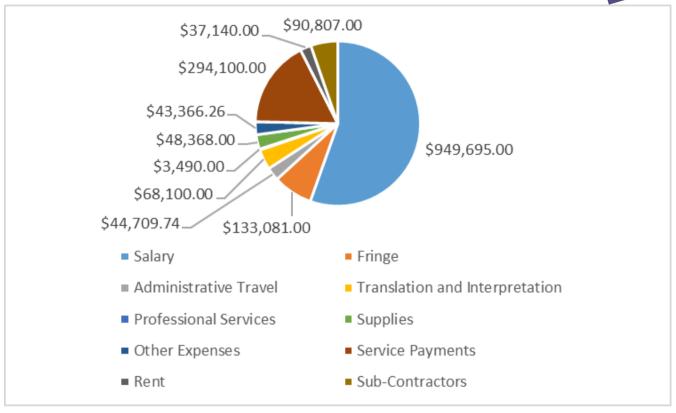


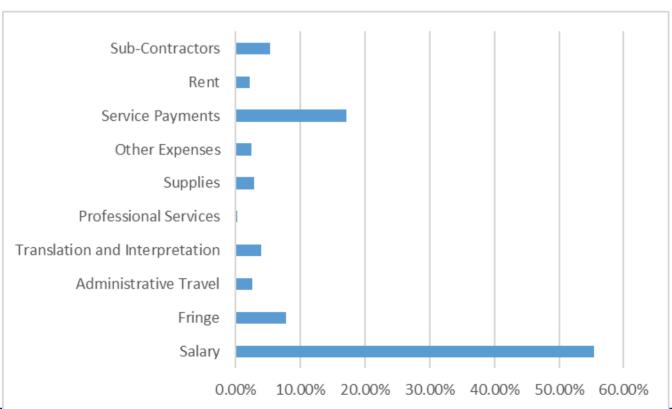
- NC DHHS RAP Refugee Support Services NC DHHS Refugee School Impact
- NC DHHS Refugee Health Promotions
- Cone Health Foundation
- SLAMM Donations

- United Way HIRE
- USCIS Citizenship
- General Donations



Expenditures





Mission, Vision, & Values



Mission

Assisting Refugees and Immigrants with Self-Sufficiency and US Citizenship through Education.

Vision

A Community that Welcomes Refugees and Immigrants, and provides them with the tools they need to achieve their goals.

Values

Student-Centered: We are committed to providing our students with education in order to meet their changing needs. We foster lifelong learning, leadership, and individual and career growth.

Learning-Centered: We nurture intellectual flexibility, knowledge and skills by integrating assessment, teaching, and learning to promote continuous advancement of our community.

Diversity: We embrace diversity in all of its dimensions recognizing that mutual respect for individuality and the inclusion of all are vital for personal, institutional, and community success. We acknowledge that categories of differences are not always fixed but also can be fluid. We respect individual rights to self-identify, and recognize that no one culture is intrinsically superior to another.

Inclusion: We strive for an inclusive environment where each individual, irrespective of race, religion, country of origin, language, education, culture, gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, immigration status, or any other personal identifier, is welcomed, understood, respected, appreciated, and recognized as a source of strength for our community.

Equity: We are steadfast in our mission to provide equitable services that take into account each client's culture, language, literacy, educational background, family make up, health, resources, needs, and abilities to afford them with the knowledge, opportunity, skills, and tools they need to achieve their goals.

Service: We support and recognize service at all levels of the institute. We strive to provide meaningful service opportunities by our clients for the wider community and by the community for our clients

Case Management

The Case Management Department is committed to empowering ORR-eligible refugees by providing essential resources and support beyond their initial 90-day resettlement period. With a dedicated team passionate about helping refugees thrive, the department offers guidance every step of the way, from assisting with DSS benefits like Medicaid and food stamp applications to connecting clients with resources tailored to their unique needs. Their ultimate goal is to help clients achieve self-sufficiency in their new home.

In collaboration with interns from UNCG and NC A&T, the department enhances its services by offering one-on-one support, including citizenship reviews when needed.

Beyond benefits assistance, the team ensures students at NAI have access to donations, such as shelf-stable food, clothing, and shoes, to support their success. The department also partners with community organizations like Truliant, CNNC, and DSS to host cultural orientation presentations, equipping clients with valuable knowledge and tools to navigate life in the U.S.

Services Provided

Total Clients Served: 600
Benefits Applied For:
Cultural Orientation:
Information and Referral: 556
Translation and Interpretation: 578

Cultural Orientation Topics

Financial Literacy
Budgeting
Smart Spending
Stretching Your Food Dollars
Alcohol Awareness
Personal Hygiene
Parenting Skills/Child Supervision
Navigating DSS

Citizenship

At New Arrivals Institute we offer classes to help eligible clients prepare to pass the US Citizenship interview and test. In order to provide full support to clients seeking naturalization, we are partnered with The Center for New North Carolinians, who offer free legal services filling out and filing the N-400 Application for Naturalization.



In the past two years, our program served over 250 students and filed applications for over 350 clients. For many of our clients, the path to US citizenship is long and arduous. We are thrilled to offer our support during this exciting moment in their journeys. In the current political climate, our clients are more eager than ever to solidify their immigration status' and fulfill the dream of American citizenship.



"Becoming a U.S. citizen is important to me because I have a daughter, and I want to vote in the upcoming presidential election for a better future for her.

It means a lot. Now, I feel like I have the full rights to express myself as a citizen."

Miya Andre, Haiti Naturalized September 2024

First time voter! "That was a great feeling, finally my voice was heard, I feel that I participated in making a decision of who will represent us. So I am so grateful for this opportunity."



Services Provided

Total Number of Clients Served: 120

Total Number of Classes Provided: 12 10-week classes

Total Number of Countries Represented: 57

Total Number of Clients who became citizens: 60+



Community Engagement

A key component of the work of NAI on behalf of refugees in North Carolina is connecting to community partners. Colleges and universities in NC and beyond are involved especially with providing 40-50 volunteers and interns per year as well as doing special projects. UNCG is a particularly strong university partner because, in addition to volunteers and interns, their Center for New North Carolinians partners on grants and programs, their Minerva Mobile Health serves clients once per week onsite, and Human Development professors and graduate students serve through multiple projects benefitting young children.



Spotlight on Community Partners

An essential college partner for 26 years (15 years as NAI) is Guilford Technical Community College (GTCC) who collaborates on teaching English classes onsite at NAI. Currently there are 7 instructors and 1 administrative staff each weekday providing 3 hours instruction for 90-130 adults daily.

Several health care providers are community partners serving our clients. Cone Health is an extraordinary partner as their onsite Congregational RN and Behavioral Health Nurses serve 3 days per week, and provides mobile clinic once a month. UNCG's Minerva mobile clinic provides care once a week at NAI. These important partnerships ensure our clients have access to care which is an important part of self-sufficiency.



Digital Equity

The Digital Equity Project, funded by the North Carolina Department of Information Technology, was officially launched by New Arrivals Institute on September 4, 2024. This initiative is designed to address the unique challenges faced by refugee and immigrant communities in accessing digital tools and resources. Through collaboration with key partners—ECU, NC ASC, USCRI, and LSC—the project aims to develop sustainable solutions that empower participants to confidently navigate and thrive in a digitally connected world. During this initial phase, NAI and its partners are focusing on strategic planning and direct engagement with refugee and immigrant communities. ECU, in collaboration with other stakeholders, has begun conducting informative interviews and scheduling focus groups to gain a deeper understanding of the barriers these communities face in accessing digital technology.

Core focus of this phase is creation of comprehensive training materials and resources designed to equip participants with the essential skills and knowledge required to thrive in a digitally connected world.

NAI's steadfast dedication to community-driven solutions reflects its broader mission to foster long-term resilience and self-sufficiency among refugees and immigrants, empowering them to build sustainable and fulfilling futures.

The Digital Equity Project embodies this commitment by promoting equitable opportunities for all, ensuring that refugee and immigrant communities have access to critical resources for education, employment, and healthcare. It is a critical step toward bridging the digital divide and creating a more inclusive and connected future.

Early Childhood Education

A core value of NAI is to empower women with free childcare, English and acculturation. This identified need 26 years ago is also the impetus for developing the program that is now the New Arrivals Institute. Free childcare for refugee families with infants through age 5 is available while parents are attending English classes and receiving services onsite. At times other classes after 12:30pm such as Drivers Education, Yoga, Therapeutic Gardening, and Employment-specific English, also offer free childcare. Preschool teachers are women from refugee countries who speak the languages of NAI families, and who have significant previous experience with educating young children or have documented early childhood education. Refugee moms are employed as needed when class attendance requires additional adults.



Early Childhood Education, cont.

NAI preschool teachers, mom assistants, interns and volunteers are expected to employ proven strategies that enhance the healthy development of the youngest children in our refugee families. Engaging infants through age 5 through talking, reading, comforting, playing with manipulatives, arts and crafts, and outdoor play are daily activities.

Some recent highlights have included visits from Canterbury School 7th graders who engage the preschool children during their weekly hour long visits. Art Quest has enhanced the 3-5 year old class each month with a unique art activity. A research group from UNCG's Human Development and Family Studies has provided language-based groups of moms with their children an activity session that focused on how to read books with young children of every age.

NAI's Growing Peace Children's Outdoor Learning Space provides invigorating outdoor experiences for refugee children, infants through age 5. The unique space includes edible gardens, diverse plantings, an outdoor classroom, mud kitchens, bamboo teepee, sandboxes, a playhouse, pathways for riding toys, picnic tables, a tree-circling platform, benches, water play, tree cookies for stepping, and fenced areas for infants- 36 months and ages 3-5. Because young children have more opportunity for social, emotional, physical and language development, the outdoor learning space acts as an inviting outdoor classroom for our youngest refugees.







Educational Services

NAI Adult Educational Services is dedicated to empowering clients with the tools they need to thrive and achieve self-sufficiency in the United States. Offering a wide range of programs, NAI meets clients wherever they are in their educational journey, supporting their growth every step of the way.



Serving adult refugees and immigrants from arrival through citizenship, NAI's Adult Educational Services forms the heart of the daily NAI community. Students attend classes regularly, not only to learn but also to connect, socialize, and rebuild their confidence in a supportive environment.

Total Clients Served: 800

English Language Training

English language training (ELT) is a critical component of integration, offering clients more than just the ability to communicate. It opens doors to employment, education, and community engagement, empowering them to navigate life in the U.S. with confidence.

NAI's ELT classes focus on foundational language skills alongside essential cultural topics to help students start their new lives. Taught by experienced instructors from Guilford Technical Community College (GTCC), these classes are made possible through a long-standing partnership between NAI and GTCC.

Clients that attended ELT classes this year: 489

New clients enrolled into ELT: 250

ELT classroom hours generated: 37,800+

Educational Services, cont.



Vocational Education

NAI integrates vocational education with English language training, equipping clients with the skills needed to secure stable employment. These programs emphasize workplace communication, cultural norms, and jobseeking strategies, empowering clients to achieve independence and economic stability.

NAI also offers comprehensive driver's education courses to prepare clients for safe driving in the U.S. These courses provide the knowledge needed to pass the permit exam and, upon obtaining a permit, clients can receive on-the-road driving lessons from a certified instructor.

Drivers Ed classes taught: 10 Clients served this year: 230

Drivers Ed classes taught in Spanish, Dari, Arabic, Swahili and English.

Vocational Skills Training

NAI supports clients in enrolling in specialized vocational skills training programs that enhance employability and improve job outcomes. Ranging from a few days to several months, these courses provide certifications that open doors to higher-paying and more sustainable employment opportunities.

Available programs include forklift operation, interpreter training, certified nursing assistant (CNA) certification, pharmacy technician training, CDL truck driving, payroll and accounting, early childhood education, and more.

Clients that completed skills training programs: 30

Educational Services, cont.



Skills Recertification

For clients with prior educational or professional credentials, NAI offers evaluation and translation services to determine their U.S. equivalency. These certified evaluations, performed by a NACES-accredited institution, are widely recognized by employers and academic institutions nationwide.

Credential evaluation increases employability and educational opportunities, enabling clients to leverage their prior achievements to rebuild their careers in the U.S.

Skills Recertification completed: 175





Health Promotions

This year, our Refugee Health Promotion program helped over 500 newcomers build healthier lives in their new community. Education is at the core of everything we do in order to empower clients to manage their own health. We provided presentations in classroom settings as well as one-on-one coaching sessions that introduce clients to the US Healthcare system and important health issues such as alcohol and substance abuse, preventing and managing chronic health conditions, nutrition, vaccines, domestic violence, and mental health.

In addition to health education, our team of caring health case managers supported 452 clients, handling both the practical and intangible aspects of access to care; from scheduling appointments to coordinating interpretation and transportation to educating clients on their health and healthcare options so they are empowered to make the best decisions for themselves and their families. By combining one-on-one support with health education, we empowered clients to navigate the complex U.S. healthcare system with confidence.

The RHP program also increased access to care for refugees through innovative partnerships that brought healthcare directly to clients. In addition to our long standing partnership with the Cone Health Congregational Nurses on-site Monday through Wednesday, UNCG School of Nursing's Minerva Mobile Clinic sets up in the school parking lot every Thursday, providing essential walk-in medical services where our clients feel most comfortable.

We also partnered with Cone Health to bring their Mobile Clinic on-site twice this fall, helping our clients establish Primary Care - a crucial step in their healthcare journey.

Health Literacy Topics

US Healthcare System
Alcohol and Substance Abuse
Birth Control
Vaccines
Domestic Violence
Self Care



Services Provided

Total Clients Served: 504 Wellness Participants: 59: Health Literacy Participants: 436

Healthcare Navigation: 452



Health Promotions



Mental Health

NAI offers free counseling to refugees who have lived in the U.S. for less than five years. The counseling is provided by an on-site licensed mental health professional. NAI understands the reality that resettlement comes with its own set of stressors, as displaced individuals must adapt quickly to a new culture, language, and lifestyle.

Many are grieving the loss of their past life and continue to be impacted by the violence that occurred in their home countries. The mental health counselor helps clients manage difficult emotions by offering a safe, confidential space where clients can share their stories, learn coping skills, explore personal goals, and connect to other valuable community resources.

Healthy Activities

We've created a true wellness hub, hosting everything from free flu vaccine clinics that served 127 people to mental health counseling and support groups serving a total of 59 clients.

New programs like our Garden Wellness Group and Swahili Men's Wellness Group are helping refugees heal and thrive while building community. Through these efforts and partnerships with local organizations, we're not just improving individual health – we're strengthening our entire community by making healthcare more accessible to all.

NAI partners with The Yoga Connection to provide yoga classes for refugee/immigrant women which are taught by volunteer yoga instructors. Sessions take place in the Spring and Fall, and clients have expressed the mental health benefits they experience as yoga class participants.

Refugee School Impact

The Refugee School Impact team assists refugee parents and students integrate into the Guilford County School system. We continue to be strong advocates for our refugee families and help children thrive academically and socially. We work diligently to empower refugees through education they need to rebuild their lives and contribute to their new communities.



We have expanded services to Davie, Davidson, and Rowan counties and hired a full-time staff person. RSI staff, interns, and volunteers work hard to help refugees adapt to the changing landscape of our community. We assisted parents with school applications, change of addresses, school bus transportation, and school tours, among others. We drove parents to school meetings and conferences, helped school administration with monitoring smooth morning bus rides, advocated for our students for high school courses, and graduation plans, and tirelessly worked with school staff to ensure older teenagers are given a fair chance to attend school and graduate before they turn 21 years of age.

Services Provided

Total Clients Served: 861 In School Services: 311 Afterschool Services: 140 Information and Referral: 59

Translation and Interpretation: 430

Client Breakdown

Early Childhood: 16 Elementary: 243

Middle: 94

High School: 150 Parents: 358



RSI - SLAMM



Over the summer, the RSI staff partnered with CNNC to provide summer enrichment programming and field trips for school-age children living at three apartment complexes that house many refugee families. These school-age children, most of them having arrived over a year ago, could not attend NAI's 8-week SLAMM program due to limited space. Priority for onsite summer programming was given to newly arrived children ages 5-15, who had not yet attended school and children who were 10 and younger who were too young to be left at home alone. Up to 94 students attend SLAMM daily.

Other Summer Activities

In addition to SLAMM, NAI took 360 clients on 22 field trips. Field trips included one or more trips to Art Quest, Biltmore House and Grounds, the Greensboro downtown library, Carolina Theatre, Civil Rights Museum, Lazy 5 Ranch, NC Zoo, the Greensboro Science Center, Carowinds amusement park, and the YMCA.









Western NC

From January 2023, NAI started working in rural counties of Watauga, Wilkes, Yadkin and Ashe, to provide services like case management, skills recertification, vocational education and skills training referrals to these areas that have not been traditional resettlement areas.

NAI has been working closely with community partners in Western NC. We have made trips to Boone to drop off donations twice after Hurricane Helene. We've helped fundraise in Greensboro.

We've done outreach at three community events in Boone, and have had partners like NC Med Assist, a free mobile pharmacy facility participate at the World Refugee Day in Greensboro.

We've been conducting Quarterly in person and virtual meetings that results in community building and knowledge share







Our Case Management services in the Western region of North Carolina focus primarily on referral services, connecting newly arrived refugees with essential resources that include: Department of Social Services (DSS) benefits, Housing assistance, Utilities assistance and Bill assistance Our services aim to support refugees in achieving self-sufficiency, with a focus on connecting them to resources within their county of residence where refugee support services are limited. By providing access to these vital services, especially in counties with limited refugee support, we help refugees become self-sufficient and build a stable future. Our services align with the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) Refugee Program Eligible Population.

NAI Across NC

NAI has been a part of the Governor Roy Cooper's Interagency Working Group, and have moderated discussions, and represented NAI on different listening sessions across the state.



We also participated in the Afghan Resource Center organized by the Governor's office in Raleigh. We were invited to the Governor's AAPI celebration at the Governor's House in Raleigh.

NAI has been creating rural hubs across the state for it's skills recertification and citizenship classes and driver's education trainings.





We've done outreach with hubs in Wilmington, Iredell, Moore and Montgomery. NAI is working on becoming a part of the coalition of non-profit and service providers in Durham, Moore and Iredell.

We've had participation in our Quarterly consultation from across NC, especially for discussions about our Digital Equity grant.





Client Story Ali Afghanistan

When asked why he left Afghanistan, Ali said 'The reason is clear - it's a big picture in front of everyone now.' He studied at an English university and worked on US projects in banking and healthcare. He and his family left Afghanistan due to security. 'I wasn't safe there, everyone knows what happened. If I stayed, they would have killed me.' he said. 'I don't want to remember that, I don't want to think about it. Everyone works for years to make something and then you just leave it-your bank account, money, things around the house, your home, everything. You can't access it, talk about it, nothing.' Institutes that teach English and other foreign languages are banned now.

The area around the airport was really dangerous, swarming with kidnappers, thieves and worse. Everyone was trying to steal people's bags or documents. 'Whenever I think about it, I cannot find the words to talk about it.' Ali said. When he got the call, he was given a gate number. His family took a taxi to the airport and drove in circles looking for this gate through the crowd and the constant roar of gunfire, screaming, crying, fighting - pure chaos. The US military was trying to control the crowd; soldiers pointed guns at cars trying to make them move. Everyone was shooting. 'It was like a rain of bullets, you are just swimming into the

bullets. You survive.' Finally, they were dropped off near the gate, pushing through all the people fighting and shooting. They waited in a ravine, in a river in the water. After 5 hours, they got into the airport with the help of soldiers and an interpreter. The officials had pictures of Ali and his family. They held up the pictures and matched each family member, and one by one the soldiers pulled them out of the river. 'And finally, peace after that.'



Inside the airport, everything felt good. From the moment they arrived, Ali jumped in to help with interpretation. Once they were on the plane, they just felt safe. More than himself, he was happy for his sisters and family. 'Now they would be able to go to school and study for their future. Feeling safe was a good feeling. All the people on the line to get on the plane, you could see a brightness in their faces - they are free now.' On their months long journey to their final destination, Ali helped out in every way he could. He interpreted, organized donations, led an impromptu exercise class, and taught an English class to fellow Afghans at an air base. 'Everyone was so nice and helpful, I was happy to help out, I just wanted to give something back.'

Ali feels he had a relatively easy time adapting to life in the US because he had worked with Americans and studied English. He had some idea of what to do when he arrived. 'The whole story is about trying to find something to do, trying to find how to help someone, how to do something.' He said. Since he has become established in the US, Ali had the opportunity to greet a newly arrived Afghan family at the airport. 'They were looking at everyone's faces, not feeling fine. When I talked to them in their language, they immediately relaxed. They feel they are in good hands. No one is a refugee unless they need help, unless they feel unsafe. Overall it is just all about how to welcome them.'



Client Story

Mona Sudan

Mona called Darfur a village, not a town or a city. In a village you don't have to pay rent to live. There are no faucets, you get the water from the ground. Life in a village is good. She lived there with her family in a small farming community. They grew tomatoes, onions, watermelons, different types of cucumbers, and peanuts, as well as wheat & sorghum for flour. The food provided sustenance for her family; any excess was taken to town to sell at market. The weather there was sunny and warm, good for growing vegetables. They also kept animals like sheep, goats, and a donkey-which was her main form or transportation, riding him back and forth to the town and city.

Life in the village was good. It was green, with trees and small rivers where people would wash their clothes and put them to dry in the sun. Some would harvest food from the garden while others collected wood and made a fire to cook dinner over. But now, now no village. Now, it is not green, there is no smiling in my village now. Everyone is fighting.

Soon after the fighting broke out, Mona got sick and had to move to the city, Khartoum, where she lived for 4 years. It was safe there then, but not now. After some years, she had the opportunity to move to Jordan with her husband and children, where she could receive better medical care. She left her mother, father, brother, and sister in Sudan and after awhile, wanted to go back, but there was nothing to go back to. They spent 7 years in Jordan at a refugee camp waiting on paperwork. Then, although it was hard to leave friends and neighbors in Jordan, they were finally resettled to the US.

Client Story, cont.

Once in the US, Mona felt very supported by her case workers. Not understanding the language was the hardest part about her transition, so she started learning English right away at New Arrivals Institute. At first, learning English was very difficult. But now that she can talk to people and understand what people say, read road signs and signs at stores, things are much easier for her. Mona now works part time at the pre school at New Arrivals Institute. She misses her family and worries about them now that a civil war has erupted again. Sometimes I think - how is my mom sleeping, how is she eating, how is she feeling? They don't have internet. Sometimes 3, 4 months, you don't hear anything.

Mona hopes to petition for her family to come to the US one day. First, she wants to buy a house with extra rooms so that her family can have a place to stay while they set up their life here. Refugees need help, they come from places where there are a lot of problems. You never know, in life, when this can happen to you.





Board of Directors

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Amy Schwartzott: Board Member

Felicia Cole: Board Member Kate Black: Board Member Rachel Boit: Board Member Hermeet Kohli: Board Member



Leilani Roughton: Executive Director

Lynn Thompson: Community Engagement Director

Smita Sarkar: Outreach Director

Program Coordinators

Chad Camp: Vocational Education Coordinator Chealy Sin: Case Management Coordinator

Tabitha Machia: Refugee Health Promotions Coordinator Kristian Hultgren: Refugee School Impact Coordinator

Juliet Biemiller: Citizenship Lead Teacher

Volodymyr Lyashchenko: Digital Equity Coordinator







Contact Information













