

NEIGHBORS FOR REFUGEES

Dear Neighbors,

Welcome to [Neighbors for Refugees' \(Neighbors'\) Fall newsletter](#), a recap of the exciting work we are accomplishing with your help:

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Refugee Update

In June, President Biden announced the U.S. would accept up to 100,000 Ukrainian refugees; and the government created the **United for Ukraine (“U4U”) program**. The U.S. has accepted **over 100,000 Ukrainian refugees** through the U4U program, other visa programs and, for a while, as asylum seekers at our southern border. Many have been supported by ad hoc sponsorship groups. Ukrainians continue to arrive, although the numbers have slowed down somewhat.

In addition, the **exodus from Afghanistan continues**. The initial wave of evacuees was **nearly 90,000 people**. Unfortunately, many Afghans are still trapped within their country. For many, that means they are in hiding or, if not, reduced to poverty. Many of the refugees here are desperately trying to get their relatives out or, at a minimum, send them money so they can survive.

The UN High Commission for Refugees estimates that approximately **six million Venezuelans have fled their country**. In response, the U.S. government recently announced a new process whereby Venezuelan nationals and their immediate family members who are outside the United States and lack U.S. entry documents can apply for advance authorization to travel to the U.S. **Up to 24,000 Venezuelans will be permitted temporary “humanitarian parole”** in the U.S. for up to two years. Individuals participating in the process must have a financial sponsor in the United States who agrees to provide them with financial support for the duration of their temporary parole in the United States. **We expect to begin seeing Venezuelan refugees early in 2023.**

Meet Our New Neighbors

Since our mid-summer newsletter, **we have welcomed seven new families (32 individuals)** to our area:

six from Afghanistan and one from Ukraine.

In July, we were privileged to **assist an Afghan women's rights activist, her husband and two toddlers in their move to the U.S.** They won the green card lottery while living in Pakistan trying to get to the U.S. We provided financial support so they could make their way here. Once they arrived, we found them an apartment and are providing rent and other assistance for the next few months. Our amazing moving team delivered a U-Haul full of furniture and housewares and helped set up the entire apartment for them. Their four-year-old is enjoying nursery school, and the father is diligently searching for a job so that this remarkable family can support itself.

Through our valuable partnership with Westchester Jewish Coalition for Immigration (WJCI), we recently became aware of a **Ukrainian family of six who were in temporary housing** and in desperate need of a permanent apartment. We offered them **our full program of resettlement services**, and they gratefully accepted. They are now living in Yonkers and acclimating to a new city, a new neighborhood, a new language, and new schools for the children ages 8 through 13. They are meeting these daunting challenges with a positive and hopeful spirit. Both parents are now seeking employment and building a new life for their children.

In addition to these families, we helped **set up apartments (moving, furnishings and household goods and labor to set everything up) for five other Afghan families.**

Pictured below are just some of the furnishings and household goods we have delivered recently to some of the families. We are so thankful for the generosity of all those who donated items or fulfilled our families' wishlists.



Update On Our Earlier Neighbors

Recently the two Afghan brothers and their families moved to Tennessee to be closer to other family members. They are joining the more than 500 Afghans that have resettled there since August 2021. **Both brothers have found employment.** While we miss them, we are thrilled to see them settled in a safe and welcoming place.

The family from Sudan continues to settle into Yonkers. The three older children are doing well in school. The youngest, a toddler, is thriving. With help from Neighbors' volunteer network, the **father is poised to**

start a job soon; and the mother continues her ESL classes four mornings a week while she also looks for employment.



We are happy to report that the **Afghan couple** who moved to the NYC area in June (after originally settling in Rochester) have **both gotten jobs and recently bought a new car** with a little help from Neighbors.

Grants

Since our last newsletter, we have awarded \$8,200 in grants to 14 families (45 people), including:

- Young woman with two teen daughters desperately needed help with **food and other necessities** until workers compensation benefits come through. She injured her foot at work and needs surgery.
- Single mother (a survivor of sexual violence and kidnapping) needed **school supplies** for her three children,
- Mother of six living on Long Island needed money for **fees** so she could get her **driver's license**.
- Mother of three (just arrived, with husband and young kids) needed money to **purchase a sewing machine and starting supplies to launch her new seamstress business**.
- Family of four living in a single room needed larger space. IRC is taking the lead and Neighbors' grant covered **moving expenses**.
- Family of five is transitioning to an apartment after living in a homeless shelter for the past year (dad's pay is low). IRC is helping with classes and moving them out of a shelter into their own apartment (they'll pay only 30% of the rent). Neighbors grant is **helping the family make ends meet while they get settled** into their new living situation
- Family that fled extreme violence has been struggling with piecemeal jobs, accrued food bills, and need to fix their car. Neighbors grant will **help get them back on their feet**
- Victim of persecution and possibly trafficking has been struggling with rent after they were laid off because their work authorization expired and is taking months to renew. Neighbors grant will help with **rent** while they get back on their feet.

Volunteer Highlight: "Welcome Circle" for a Ukrainian Family

During the past 12 months, the State Department redefined groups who could sponsor refugees. In the past, all refugees went through one of nine national resettlement agencies (e.g., HIAS, IRC, Catholic Charities). These agencies relied on organizations like Neighbors to be their boots on the ground, to provide resettlement support. Now, in addition to established organizations like Neighbors, informal groups of people have formed "Welcome Circles" to expand local refugee resettlement capabilities. **Neighbors has gathered new volunteers to form its first Welcome Circle, to support the Ukrainian family you met above.**



Fundraising Update

As we come to the November-end of our campaign year, we thank all of you who have supported Neighbors. Your support has allowed us to respond to the dual crises of the Afghan evacuation and the Ukraine war. We are proud of the fact that we helped resettle 40 families in the last 12 months, more than we helped in all our previous years combined. **This year's success is enabled by nearly \$200,000 in individual contributions** since last December -- a **40% increase** over 2021. We've also received a **record number of 10 grants of over \$65,000**. That said, our resettlement efforts have exceeded our fund-raising to date and much work remains to be done going into year-end.

As we set our sights on 2023, we know the demand for our services will continue apace. Afghan refugees are still arriving, The Ukraine war continues unabated. And, refugees from all around the world will still need to find a place safe from persecution and violence, including thousands from Venezuela.

Please consider making a donation today. Any amount is appreciated and will help.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Frank D. Pierson

Frank D. Pierson
President

PS, All of this is only possible because of your donations. Neighbors **needs your support now more**

than ever to be able to welcome the families awaiting our immediate support, and to prepare for the many families we know will be coming in 2023.

Donate



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