The US Resettlement Program in Alabama

Refugee Population in Alabama:
Alabama has resettled over 1,200 refugees since 2001, with the majority most recently immigrating from Iran, Iraq, Somalia, and Cuba. Alabama resettled 89 refugees in 2011, with many calling Mobile their new home.

Services Available for Refugees:
For the state of Alabama, Catholic Social Services runs the Refugee Resettlement Program, which is designed to meet the special needs of refugees. It was created in the early summer of 1975, with the fall of the South Vietnamese government to communist control. Bishops across the United States provided an immediate response offering the support of social service agencies in their diocese. Since that time, Mobile has welcomed more than 6,300 refugees. In each case, a plan is developed to assist the refugees achieve self-sufficiency in the shortest time possible. The Refugee Resettlement Program is federally funded by the Office of Refugee Resettlement, and services provided include: reception, orientation, case management, job development, English language training, school and health related issues, translation, legal assistance, and more.

Refugee Success Story:
Thanh Boyer of Madison and Loan McAllister of Huntsville are sisters as well as refugees from Vietnam, escaping the horrors of the Vietnamese conflict after the fall of Saigon in 1975 when they were young girls. Thanh and Loan were told by their parents they were going "on a vacation." They were sent by boat to Indonesia along with a couple of hundred other people to a refugee camp. After three days at sea with only a place to sit, and little food and water, the crowded boat was attacked by Malaysian pirates. The young girls and their relatives spent more than a year in a refugee camp. They dug wells for drinking water, washed their clothes in a creek and cut trees to build thatch huts. Boyer, who nearly died of dysentery, said she remembers she often went to bed hungry. Eventually, the girls were resettled in Alabama in 1980. Boyer attended Calhoun Community College and Athens State. She and her husband, John, met on a blind date. They have two children, Katherine, 17, and J. B., 16. McAllister graduated from the University of Alabama in Huntsville with a degree in electrical engineering. She also met her husband, Paul, on a blind date. They have two children, Allie, 10, and Mandy, 8. Four years after the Boyers married, they decided to sponsor the immigration of their parents and the other siblings. The parents, Tan Duong and Phuong Nguyen, live in Madison, along with one sister, Thu Duong, and brother, Tham Duong. Another sister lives in California. A third sister lives in North Carolina. Boyer and McAllister agree the war was a blessing in disguise for their family. "I would probably be a farmer," McAllister said. "That's hard work. I'm happy I live here. Vietnam is a nice place to visit, but I wouldn't want to live there."1

Local affiliates and offices of Voluntary Agencies in Alabama:
- USCCB, Catholic Social Services, Refugee Resettlement Program, Mobile

In addition to this agency, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history.

1 http://blog.al.com/breaking/2010/07/former_vietnam_refugees_enjoy.html
The US Resettlement Program in Alaska

Refugee Population of Alaska:
Alaska has resettled 644 refugees since FY 2001. Currently, the majority of these refugees are from Bhutan, Burma, and Somalia, and most were primarily resettled in the Anchorage area. In FY 2011, Alaska received 86 refugees.

Services Available to Refugees:
Catholic Social Services’ Refugee Assistance and Immigration Services (RAIS) serves as the refugee resettlement office for the state of Alaska, providing refugees with rent, food, clothes, cash assistance, and help finding housing and employment upon arrival.

Primary Program Services:
- Cash and medical assistance for the first eight months the client is in the United States, if he or she is ineligible for TANF benefits.
- Access to English as a second language classes.
- Vocational assistance to help clients develop the U.S. training credentials and obtain the job-related tools necessary for competitive job hunting.
- Employment assistance, including finding and applying for jobs, resume writing, and job coaching.
- Document translation, assistance making appointments, and interpretive services where appropriate.
- Assist with applications for access to public benefits and public agencies.
- Cultural orientation and civics lessons.

Refugee Success Story:
At-Tahir Karief, a farmer from Sudan, arrived in Anchorage in February 2008 as the first refugee from Darfur to find a home in Alaska. Having fled the conflict in Sudan in 2004, Karief began his journey in a refugee camp in Chad. After leaving Chad he and his family traveled by bus across Africa through Cameroon, Nigeria and Benin, and then lived in a refugee camp in Ghana for three years. In Ghana he felt safe, but living conditions in the camp quickly deteriorated. After several months, he found there was little food, water and medication for his family. UNHCR referred Karief to the U.S. resettlement program. After waiting for several months, Karief was told he would be resettled to the U.S. with his family. He now works for a cargo company loading and unloading airplanes at the Anchorage airport. A native Arabic speaker, he began learning English in refugee camps, but takes regular classes to improve his language skills. "I love it so much here. I can feel peace. I love freedom. Nobody bothers me. We are very satisfied and happy with what we have," says Karief. 2

Local Affiliates and Offices of Voluntary Agencies in Alaska:
- USCCB, Catholic Social Services, Anchorage

In addition to this agency, ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history.

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2 http://www.isedsolutions.org/blog/wilson-fish/refugees-darfur-alaska
Refugee Population of Arizona:
Currently, Arizona is among the top ten states resettling refugees in the United States. In FY 2011 a total of 2,173 resettled in the state, and between 1983 and 2011 53,256 refugees were resettled in Arizona. Since 2001, approximately 3.8% of the nation's newly arrived refugees have been resettled in Arizona. For FY 2011, it was projected that 75% of refugees who arrive in Arizona would be resettled in the Phoenix metropolitan area and about 25% in the Tucson area.

The Arizona Refugee Resettlement Program (RRP) supports and advances successful refugee resettlement through the coordination of public and private resources that best enable refugees and other eligible beneficiaries to be firmly established on the path to success and well being. **RRP is 100 percent funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR).** The Governor designated the Department of Economic Security (DES) as the single state agency responsible for the administration of the state’s refugee resettlement program, managed under the State Refugee Coordinator. Asylees, Cuban/Haitian entrants, certain Amerasians, Special Immigrant Visa holders and victims of severe forms of human trafficking are among the other humanitarian immigrants eligible for ORR assistance and services. The goal of the resettlement program is to assist refugees in their transition and integration into the United States. As designed by the Refugee Act of 1980, refugees are assisted so they can become self-sufficient as quickly as possible. One of the most critical tasks is to find adequate jobs and safe, decent and affordable housing for refugees.

Refugee resettlement agencies provide comprehensive resettlement and adjustment services to help thousands of refugees fleeing social, political and religious persecution. Resettlement staff reflects the diversity of arriving refugees, with over 40 languages and 50 countries of origin since 2005. They help new arrivals acquire the basic necessities for starting life anew, such as: food, clothing, medical care, a first apartment, furniture, personal items and meaningful employment. The primary goal is to help refugees adjust to life in America and become self-sufficient as quickly as possible. Affiliates frequently work closely with church co-sponsors, community groups and family anchors to provide the resources necessary for the successful integration and independence of refugee families.

**Refugee Success Story:**
After Emmett Kamara was resettled in the United States from Liberia thirty years ago he decided he wanted to use his experience to help others. He now works with other Phoenix Resettlement agencies to help newly arrived refugees navigate the system and settle into the Phoenix area. He noticed that many of the Liberian families were single-parent households where the parent had to be out of the house working for most of the day, he felt that something needed to be done to keep the unsupervised youths out of trouble. He decided to form a soccer team called the Desert Lone Star of Arizona to give the young men and boys an activity to keep them active and off the streets and to give them a sense of belonging. The program focuses not just on the actual game of soccer but also on teaching the boys important life skills such as showing up on time and accountability. Since its creation the team has traveled throughout the country to play matches and has helped keep kids active and off the streets.

**Local affiliates and offices of Voluntary Agencies in Arizona:**

- USCCB, Catholic Charities Community Services, Phoenix
- USCCB, Catholic Community Services of Southern Arizona, Tucson
- CWS/LIRS, Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest, Phoenix
- EMM/LIRS, Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest, Tucson
- IRC, International Rescue Committee, Phoenix
- IRC, International Rescue Committee, Tucson
- ECDC, Refugee and Immigrant Relief Center, Phoenix

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history.

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Refugee Population of California:
California receives more refugees than any other state. Between 2001 and 2011, California received 78,989 refugees, Amerasians, and other humanitarian migrant entrants. The largest refugee groups are currently coming from Iraq and Iran. During FY 2011, 4,975 refugees arrived in California, 8.8% of all refugees resettled in the United States that year. Prior to 1990, refugees were primarily from Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, arriving in the aftermath of the Vietnam Conflict.

The California Refugee Resettlement Program (RRP) is implemented by partners at the federal, state, county, and community level. It is fully funded by the federal government through the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) and is administered by the state through the California Department of Social Services, Refugee Programs Bureau (RPB). The RPB supervises local delivery of RRP benefits and services, which assist refugees and other eligible populations to adjust socially and attain the skills they need to find employment and become self-sufficient. In addition to the state-administered RRP, a Wilson-Fish project operates in San Diego County, under direct contract with ORR, to serve the arrivals to San Diego who otherwise would receive cash assistance and employment services under the Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) program.

Services Available to Refugees in California:
Refugees/asylees, Cuban/Haitian entrants, Amerasians, certain parolees, certified victims of human trafficking, and special immigrant visa holders are eligible for the RRP. If otherwise eligible, these populations may receive the following benefits and services in California:

- **Cash Assistance** under the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) Program (California’s Temporary Assistance to Needy Families program); RCA; Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary Payment Program, or General Relief.
- **Medical Assistance** under Medi-Cal (California’s Medicaid program); or Refugee Medical Assistance.
- **Food Assistance** under CalFresh (California’s Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program).
- **Employment Services** under the Refugee Social Services and Targeted Assistance programs for those who have been in the U.S. for five years or less. These services are designed to help them become employed within one year or to retain employment after finding a job.
- **Unaccompanied Refugee Minor services** such as foster care and independent living services to refugee, asylee, and trafficked children, and to minors granted Special Immigrant Juvenile status who have come to the U.S. without parents or a close relative to care for them.
- **Other services** such as supplemental educational services to assist refugee school age children to succeed in school; and services to link older refugees to mainstream services for the elderly and provide them with the citizenship/naturalization assistance.

Refugee Success Story
Daniel Do-Khanh grew up in Orange County. He was only 4 years old when his family escaped from Vietnam in 1975. He graduated in 1993 from UC Irvine and works as a business and employment attorney. His family rarely talks about the story of their escape. Do-Khanh has often sought to collect Vietnamese-American oral histories and make them accessible to the public. He wants his story, as well as the stories of many Vietnamese refugees to be preserved for generations to come. UC Irvine has adopted this dream of his and launched the Vietnamese American Oral History Project with a three-year push to document the experiences of Vietnamese Americans in Southern California.4

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4 http://www.ocregister.com/articles/says-310413-stories-vietnamese.html
Local affiliates and offices of Voluntary Agencies in California:

- **World Relief**, Sacramento, Modesto, San Jose, Garden Grove, Glendale
- **ECDC, African Community Resource Center**, Los Angeles
- **USCRI, International Institute of Los Angeles**, Glendale
- **CWS, St. Anselm’s Cross Cultural Community Center**, Garden Grove
- **CWS, Opening Doors, Inc.**, Sacramento County
- **USCCB, Catholic Charities**, Santa Ana, Santa Rosa, San Bernardino, Sacramento, San Diego, San Francisco, Oakland, San Jose, Los Angeles, Glendale, Anaheim
- **LIRS, Crittenton Services for Children and Families**, Fullerton
- **HIAS, Jewish Federation/Jewish Family Service**, Los Angeles, Los Gatos, San Diego, San Francisco, Walnut Creek
- **ECDC, Alliance for African Assistance**, San Diego
- **CWS/EMM/LIRS, Interfaith Refugee & Immigration Services of the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles**, Los Angeles
- **ECDC, East African Community of Orange County**, Anaheim
- **IRC, International Rescue Committee**, Glendale, Oakland, Sacramento, San Diego, San Jose, Turlock, San Francisco

Grantees for Torture Treatment Services in California

- **The Center for Torture Survivors at Asian-Americans for Community Involvement**, San Jose
- **Program for Victims of Torture**, Los Angeles
- **Torture Survivors Project at Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles**, Los Angeles
- **Survivors of Torture, International**, San Diego

In addition to these agencies, many refugee Mutual Assistance Associations (MAAs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history.
Refugee Population of Colorado:
Colorado has received about 1.7% of all refugees who have come to the U.S. since 2001. They represent more than 60 countries of origin and over 80 languages. There are over 44,000 refugees and former refugees residing in Colorado. The majority resettle in the Denver/Metro area. Refugees also resettle in Colorado Springs, Boulder, Ft. Collins, Greeley, and Ft. Morgan. Some services are available without regard to income, while other service availability is based on household income. Ethnic groups include Vietnamese, Cambodian, Burmese, Bhutanese, Hmong, Lao, Russian, Bosnian, Ethiopian, Afghani, Iranian, Iraqi, Somali, Sudanese, Cuban/Haitian, Kurdish and others.

COLORADO REFUGEE SERVICES PROGRAM (CRSP) is a division of the Colorado Department of Human Services. In existence since 1980, the program is 100% federally funded. CRSP is currently funded at about $16.5 million annually by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Refugee Resettlement, under the authority of the Refugee Act of 1980, as amended. The goal of CRSP is to ensure effective resettlement and promote refugee self-sufficiency and integration. Colorado is one of 13 state and county administered states, and CRSP mirrors this structure through its staff of eight that provide state leadership and management, while direct services are provided by about 15 public and private contractors. On behalf of the state and counties, CRSP manages the case management and supportive services for all Colorado refugees who are eligible for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). More information and data can be found on CRSP’s website: http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/CDHS-SelfSuff/CBON/1251580884704.

Refugee Success Story:
In May 2011 Rev. Andudu Adam Elnail came to the United States to receive medical treatment. By June war had broken out in his home country of Sudan and his diocese was targeted. Security forces bombed his office, looted the church guesthouse and cathedral, and went to his house looking for him and have since begun to reside in it. He decided to seek asylum to stay in the United States. Once it was granted he relocated to Denver, CO and with the help of a local congregation from the St. John’s Episcopal Church he has continued to do what he can to help those in his homeland, including testifying about the conflict before the United Nations Security Council. 5

“Refugees contribute to Colorado communities in important ways. They work, pay taxes, bring strong family values and add needed diversity to our society. As they learn to live in a new society where they generally do not yet speak the language, they must also deal with trauma, grief and loss” 6.

By Daniel Savin, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, Denver

Local affiliates/offices in Colorado:
- ECDC, African Community Center, Denver
- EMM/CWS, Ecumenical Refugee and Immigration Services, Denver
- LIRS, Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountains, Denver
- HIAS, Jewish Family Service of Colorado, Denver

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history.

The US Resettlement Program in Connecticut

Refugee Population of Connecticut:
Connecticut received 447 refugees in FY 2011. The largest groups were from Burma, Iraq, and Bhutan. Between the years of 1983 and 2011, over 23,000 refugees were resettled in Connecticut. Between those years, the largest groups were from Cambodia, Laos, Poland, the former Soviet Republics, former Yugoslavia, and Vietnam.

The Community, Energy and Refugee Services Division of the Department of Social Services (DSS):
DSS receives funding from the Office of Refugee Resettlement. They are responsible for administering refugee resettlement by dispersing federal funds and contracting with local Voluntary Agency affiliates. Refugees are assigned by the U.S. Department of State to local affiliates of national voluntary resettlement agencies in Connecticut. DSS administers refugee cash and medical assistance programs and monitors resettlement activity for individuals who qualify as refugees under international law. A refugee can request to become a legal permanent resident after one-year residence in the U.S. and can apply for U.S. citizenship five years after their date of entry to the U.S.

Center for Victims of Torture:
Victims of torture often require specific medical and psychological counseling and care due to the traumatic experiences they have been subjected to. Certain medical centers are designed to deal with this vulnerable population and treat any mental and physical scars from the torture. In Connecticut this is provided by Khmer Health Advocates in West Hartford.

Refugee Success Stories in Connecticut:
Sara Tewolde fled Ethiopia after her husband was killed and she was targeted by the military. Tewolde and her son, Berket, traveled from Ethiopia to Kenya and Uganda, where they lived for four years in a refugee camp. They arrived to the United States in 2004. Her journey was sponsored by St. John the Baptist, a Guilford church in New Haven. While they have struggled with homelessness and currently reside in transitional housing, things are looking up. Berket has been invited to participate in the Junior National Young Leaders Conference, a summer leadership training gathering for “high-achieving” middle-school students from all over the country. He is thriving in the seventh grade at Celentano School, where he plays soccer and the clarinet. Tewolde tries to buy him books when he asks her for more. He never asks for toys; she can’t say no. Berket likes science and math and wants to be a chemist; he wants to cure cancer. Berket has applied for a scholarship to cover the $1,700 fee for participation in the Junior National Young Leaders Conference.

Local Affiliates and Offices of Voluntary Agencies in Connecticut:
- USCCB, Catholic Charities Migration & Refugee Services, Hartford
- CWS/EMM, Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services, New Haven
- USCRI, International Institute of Connecticut, Bridgeport

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history.

7 http://www.newhavenindependent.org/index.php/archives/entry/rising_son/id_44066
The US Resettlement Program in Florida

Refugee Population in Florida:
Florida maintains the largest refugee population in the nation, with 271,574 refugees arriving during the ten-year period between FFY 2002-2011 (27,204 in FFY 2011 alone). Florida’s refugees are a diverse group that includes Cuban/Haitian Entrants, refugees arriving through the U.S. State Department’s resettlement program, asylees, and Iraqi SIVs. Cuba is the country of origin of most refugees in Florida; however, Florida’s refugees come from 97 different countries, including Haiti, Burma, Iraq, Venezuela, Colombia, Bhutan, and Eritrea. Refugees resettle primarily in Miami-Dade County with significant populations in Hillsborough, Broward, Duval, Palm Beach, Orange, Pinellas, and Collier Counties.

Services Available to Refugees:
Florida’s Refugee Services Program is 100% federally funded through grants from the Department of Health and Human Services’ Office of Refugee Resettlement. Refugee Services manages 70 contracts with community-based organizations and local governments that provide employment services, English language classes, vocational and short-term job skills training, integration assistance, youth and family services, child care, and employability (legal) services. In FFY 2011, Refugee Services contracted providers served 69,583 unduplicated refugee clients. Refugee Services has also supported refugees’ efforts to form Ethnic Community-Based Organizations (ECBOs). In the past year, Burmese ECBOs have formed in Jacksonville and Tampa and Bhutanese and Iraqi ECBOs have formed in Jacksonville. Florida has an Unaccompanied Refugee Minors (URM) Program in Miami and a Center for Survivors of Torture that serves refugees in Tampa and Miami. The state also has an active anti-trafficking effort and serves certified victims of human trafficking in the URM program as well as in adult services for refugees.

Refugee Health Program provides newly arrived refugees health screenings and immunizations. Refugees with identified health conditions are referred to primary care physicians for follow-up healthcare, and in Duval, Hillsborough, Orange and Palm Beach counties, Refugee Health Case Managers assist them to access and navigate the healthcare system.

Refugee Success Story:
Desiree Gutierrez fled to the United States in 2006 from Cuba, where she worked as a hotel manager after graduating from college. Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Venice placed Desiree in a housekeeping job at the Doubletree Guest Suites in Naples, where she was subsequently promoted to Assistant Housekeeping Manager and later Executive Housekeeping Manager. Every morning, Desiree begins the day by providing fellow refugee housekeepers staff training, vocational English, and citizenship classes. She has built a nationally recognized, award-winning housekeeping team that in 2010 received the Doubletree by Hilton Excellence in Housekeeping Award, given annually to the best hotel housekeeping staff in the United States. Desiree was also one of four finalists for Doubletree Employee of The Year from among 2500 employees. She was a member of the Naples Refugee Advisory Panel and represented refugees in Florida at the 2011 Office of Refugee Resettlement’s annual Consultation in Washington, DC, and at the Refugee Congress convened by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. Desiree and two of her Doubletree housekeeping colleagues became U.S. citizens in February 2012.

Local Affiliates and Offices in Florida:
- USCCB, Catholic Charities, Miami, Orlando, West Palm Beach, Pensacola/Tallahassee, Jacksonville, St. Petersburg, Naples/Ft. Myers
- CWS, Miami, Palm Beach
- EMM, Miami, Jacksonville
- International Rescue Committee (IRC), Miami
- LIRS, Lutheran Services Florida, Miami, Orlando, Tampa
- LIRS, Lutheran Social Services of NE Florida, Jacksonville
- World Relief, Jacksonville, Miami
- USCRI, Youth Co-Op Inc., Miami, West Palm Beach
- ECDC, Coptic Orthodox Charities, Clearwater
- HIAS, Gulf Coast Jewish Family and Community Services, Clearwater

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history. There are also facilities that specialize in assisting refugees that were victims of torture, such as the Florida Center for Survivors of Torture in Clearwater and Miami Springs.
The US Resettlement Program in Georgia

Refugee Population of Georgia:
Georgia has received over 23,125 refugees since 2001. In FY 2011, 2,635 refugees were resettled in Georgia, 4.7% of the overall percentage of refugees resettled in the United States. The largest refugee groups currently resettling in Georgia are from Bhutan, Burma, Iraq, and Somalia.

Services Available to Refugees in Georgia:
The U.S. Refugee Program in Georgia is administered by the Georgia Department of Human Services and is funded 100% by federal funding. Refugees/asylees, Cuban/Haitian entrants, Amerasians, parolees and victims of human trafficking are eligible for the Refugee Assistance Program (RAP).

Refugee Health Program:
The purpose of the Georgia Department of Community Health Refugee Health Program is to promote the physical, mental, and social well-being of all newly arriving refugees in the state of Georgia. The program ensures that refugees receive adequate healthcare, which is not provided in their native country. Screening refugees within 90 days of their arrival aids in the reduction of contracting contagious diseases and/or spreading any diseases to the indigenous community in which the refugee resides. In correlation, outreach services provide health education to the refugee community, further ensuring prevention of infirmity. During calendar year 2008, Georgia received 2,824 refugees. Eighty-seven percent received health screenings.

Refugee Resettlement Program:
Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) and Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA) are available to refugees during their first eight months in the U.S. To be eligible for RCA, a refugee must be ineligible for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). A refugee who is eligible for RCA and/or RMA and then receives increased earnings from employment will continue to be eligible for RMA until the end of his/her 8-month eligibility period. The Division of Family and Children Services Refugee Program provides funds to the Division of Public Health through a Memorandum of Agreement to provide health screening and follow-up treatment to refugees. Refugees receive the health screening during their first 90 days in the country. The Division of Public Health has bilingual staff to assist with the health screening and follow-up treatment. Refugees are eligible for social services through the Refugee Resettlement Program upon arrival in Georgia. Certain services have restrictions based on length of time in the United States.

Refugee Success Story:
Faduma Ahmed Mohamed came to Atlanta as a refugee, fleeing from danger in Somalia. At the age of 17, Faduma’s husband had covered her in kerosene and lit a match all in a jealous rage. Fearing for her life she was resettled in the United States. She was welcomed at the airport in Atlanta by Hussien Mohamed, an Ethiopian American. He had heard of her plight through a YouTube video. Mohamed himself is a refugee who now works with Emory University. He broadcasts weekly programs in six languages aimed to help refugees in adjusting to life in the US. He is truly a refugee that is giving back to his society, and is constantly seeking to help others like himself to assimilate to their new life. Faduma shared with a reporter, “I feel the love. It makes me feel good. It gives me hope.” Her dream is to go into medicine and help burn victims.*

Local affiliates and offices of Voluntary Agencies in Georgia:
- USCCB, Migration and Refugee Services, Atlanta
- Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Atlanta, Atlanta
- IRC, The International Rescue Committee, Atlanta
- CWS/EMM, Refugee Resettlement and Immigration Services of Atlanta, Decatur
- WR, World Relief Atlanta, Atlanta
- LIRS, Lutheran Services of Georgia, Atlanta, Savannah
- HIAS, Jewish Family and Career Service, Atlanta

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the start to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history.

The US Resettlement Program in Hawaii

Refugee Population in Hawaii:
Hawaii has resettled over 100 refugees since 2001, with the majority most recently immigrating from the former U.S.S.R., Myanmar, and Vietnam. Many recently resettled refugees require acculturation into Hawaii and are victims of human trafficking.

Services Available for Refugees:
The Hawaii Department of Labor and Industrial Relations runs the Office of Community Services, which settles refugees within its borders. It is federally funded by the Office of Refugee Resettlement to provide and coordinate post-resettlement services to refugees. These services include: social services, English as a Second Language courses, case management, citizenship assistance and employment and training services.

Refugee Success Story:
John Nyunt is a refugee from Myanmar, resettled in the United States in 2000 as a political refugee fleeing the oppressive military regime. In Burma, he was a well-respected lawyer and political activist. In 1992, because of his community organizing and legal activity against the government, Nyunt was arrested and imprisoned for seven long years. He spent the first three months of his sentence in solitary confinement. "There was no light, no restroom, no shower," he recalled. "I slept on bricks. Sometimes I could hear other prisoners being beaten with sticks. After one month I had psychosis." Life in the general prison population was scarcely better. Nyunt said he and his fellow prisoners were forced to live in their own filth and had to bat the vermin from their food if they wanted to eat. Eventually, after a long journey through Guam and many cities in the U.S., he resettled in Hawaii, finding work as an assistant manager at 7-11, a job for which he is grateful. Nyunt's former wife and two sons chose to remain in Myanmar. And while he said he would like to return one day for a visit, Nyunt — who became an official U.S. citizen February, 2011 — says his home is in Hawaii. "Becoming a U.S. citizen was the proudest moment of my life," he said. "I am happy to be in a country that observes human rights, and I want to stay here for the rest of my life. Here I can speak freely and tell people, 'This is my life.'"

Local affiliates and offices of Voluntary Agencies in Hawaii:

- USCRI, Pacific Gateway Center, Honolulu: Serves Oahu and Kauai.
- USCCB, Catholic Charities, Honolulu: Serves Honolulu.

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history.

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The US Resettlement Program in Idaho

Refugee Population of Idaho:
Since 2001, Idaho has received over 8,000 refugees. Refugees arrive in Idaho from many areas of the world, forced to flee their native lands because of the persecution they have endured on account of their beliefs, opinions or ethnic heritage. The largest refugee groups are currently coming from Bhutan, Burma, and Iraq. Once newly arriving refugees have been resettled, the Idaho Office for Refugees provides assistance and services designed to help these new Americans become integrated into their communities as productive, contributing members of society.

Services Available to Refugees in Idaho:
The Idaho Office for Refugees works to promote mutual understanding between refugees and the larger community by sharing information, encouraging social interaction and developing opportunities for refugees to participate in all aspects of community life. The Idaho Office for Refugees (IOR) has statewide responsibility for the provision of assistance and services to refugees. The IOR is a private sector initiative known as Wilson/Fish, replacing the traditional State-administered program for refugee assistance and services. Under agreement with the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement, the IOR endeavors to ease the difficult transition refugees experience as they adjust to life in the USA.

The IOR supports, through contracts and cooperative agreements, the provision of interim financial assistance, English language training, employment services, job training, immigration assistance, language assistance, case management and social adjustment services in the communities where refugees are resettled.

The Idaho Refugee Health Screening Program:
The Idaho Refugee Health Screening Program provides initial physical and mental health screening and supports follow-up care for newly arriving refugees through partnerships with resettlement agencies, private providers and a statewide network of public health agencies. A Health Navigator program has been implemented recently with the support of stakeholders to improve refugee self-reliance by ensuring they can access and utilize healthcare services appropriately with the help of resettlement case workers and health navigators.

Refugee Success Story:
At the age of 12, Fidel Nshombo was completely separated from his family during the First and Second Congo Wars. He journeyed through seven African countries in search of safety, barely surviving some of Africa’s meanest streets. At more than one point, he narrowly escaped being killed. After years of exile, Fidel was finally approved for refugee status and was resettled in Boise. Just recently, he was awarded the Idaho Refugee Integration and Success Award and has distinguished himself in the community as a human rights activist, an advocate for refugees and refugee issues, a refugee team soccer coach, a refugee youth mentor, a gifted poet and writer, and a dedicated employee at the Doubletree Riverside Hotel as a Night Auditor. He has also been the keynote speaker at the Idaho Human Rights Education Center Book Club and at the Martin Luther King Day celebration at the Idaho Capitol Rotunda. Fidel writes poetry and prose in the hopes that sharing his story will someday help bring about greater peace and compassion around the globe. His first book of poetry is “Route to Peace.” Half of the proceeds are sent to his family in Africa; he discovered that some of his family members were still alive in 2008. Fidel became a proud United States citizen in October 2011 and spends many hours helping other refugees settle into life in the U.S.9

Local affiliates and offices of Voluntary Agencies in Idaho:
- EMM, Agency for New Americans, Boise
- USCRI, College of Southern Idaho Refugee Service Center, CSI Refugee Programs, Twin Falls
- The International Rescue Committee (IRC), Boise
- WR, World Relief Treasure Valley, Boise

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history.

Refugee Population in Illinois:
Illinois has resettled 19,085 refugees since 2001. The majority of the refugees resettled in FY 2011 were from Iraq with 599 refugees, followed by Burma and Bhutan, with 573 and 510 refugees resettled, respectively. In FY 2011, Illinois resettled 1,941 refugees, making up 3.4% of the United States refugee arrivals in that year. The program sites are primarily located in Chicago, while a few are outside of the Chicago city limits.

Services Available to Refugees:
Unique to Illinois, the federally–funded U.S. Refugee Program is administered by the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago through a prime contract with the Illinois Department of Human Services. This structure allows for additional collaboration across providers and has led over the years to innovative social service delivery to all refugees. The Refugee Program facilitates relocation and economic self-sufficiency to those refugees who are in particular need after experiencing political or religious persecution. The Refugee Program in Illinois aims to provide a unique bilingual, bicultural program through community based services. Services include adjustment counseling, orientation, English as a Second Language, vocational training, job readiness, and job placement. Bilingual mental health services are available for those refugees needing therapy after experiencing severe trauma. K-12 programming as well as programming for Seniors is also available through a combination of government resources and philanthropic funds.

The Illinois Department of Human Services also provides a Refugee and Immigrant Citizen Initiative (RICI), which is the first state funded program of its kind. There are thirty-five programs in Illinois dedicated to helping refugees with programs such as English as a Second Language, civics, and U.S. history instruction, which will help them receive U.S. citizenship. There is also an Outreach, Translation, and Interpretation Program funded by the Illinois Department of Human Services which insures that the refugees in the most need receive specialized care and access to public benefits.

Refugee Success Story:
Clementine escaped the massacres in Rwanda. In 2002 speaking no English, she and her sister were resettled in Illinois. In 2005, Oprah held a teen essay contest. Of the 50,000 submissions, reviewed by 200 teachers, Clementine’s was awarded first place. She is now completing an all expenses paid college career at Yale University. She illustrates what impact effective teachers and resettlement workers can have, as well as the courage, resilience, and innate talents of the refugees.

Local Affiliates and Offices of Volunteer Agencies in Illinois:

- USCCB, Catholic Charities, Chicago, Rockford
- ECDC, Ethiopian Community Association, Chicago
- USCR, Heartland Alliance for Human Needs and Human Rights, Chicago
- CWS/LIRS/EMM, RefugeeOne, Chicago
- Pan African Association, Chicago
- Rock Valley College, Rockbridge
- World Relief, Chicago, DuPage/Aurora, Moline, Wheaton
- HIAS, Jewish Child and Family Services, Chicago
- Mount Sainai/ Touhy Health Center, Chicago
- Heartland Health Outreach, Chicago
- Winnebago County Health Dept., Rockford
- Aunt Martha’s Health Center, Aurora

Health and Medical Services for Newly Arrived Refugees:

- Illinois Department of Public Health, Chicago
- Access Community Health Network, Chicago
- Chicago Department of Public Health, Chicago
- Rock Island County Health Dept., Rock Island
- Mount Sainai/ Touhy Health Center, Chicago
- Heartland Health Outreach, Chicago
- Winnebago County Health Dept., Rockford
- Aunt Martha’s Health Center, Aurora

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history. There are also facilities that specialize in assisting refugees that were victims of torture, such as the Heartland Alliance Marjorie Kovler Center in Chicago.
The US Resettlement Program in Indiana

1,197 refugees were resettled in Indiana in FY 2011. Between 1983 and 2011, approximately 15,712 refugees were resettled in Indiana.

The Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) is the state government agency that provides services for refugees in Indiana.

Indiana State Department of Health - Refugee Health Program:
To support the resettlement of refugees by providing access and resources for an initial health screening upon arrival to the United States and by identifying emerging health issues in refugee populations, and to provide ongoing support through relationships with community, state and federal partners. Every refugee in Indiana receives an initial health screening within 90 days of US arrival and referral to a medical home.

Exodus Refugee Immigration:
Refugees come to our country with only what they can carry. Therefore, prior to arrival Exodus, along with sponsoring partners, coordinate resettlement through housing, furnishings and other basic needs necessary to welcome them. During the next three to six months, we work closely with community groups as a resource to assist with needed resettlement documents, health and welfare services, education, job placement, translators, and transportation needs.

Refugee Success Story:
Before the 1994 Rwandan genocide Alice and Jean Baptiste Cyusa had masters degrees, jobs in banks, and property in their name. Afterwards they were refugees seeking political asylum in South Bend, IN. With the help of a local resettlement program Alice took classes to learn about self-sufficiency and interned at the University of Notre Dame human resources office. Shortly thereafter she found a job in Notre Dame’s biology department working for a program that helps Hatians combat mosquito-born elephantiasis. She continues to work at Notre Dame, now in the psychology department and lives with her husband and their three children in a three bedroom apartment nearby. About her refugee experience “she says that God works through it to teach everyone...that you can help someone you've never met in your life, and you can trust someone you've never met in your life.”

Local affiliates/offices in Indiana:
- CWS, American Red Cross, St. Joseph County Refugee Program, South Bend
- USCCB, Catholic Charities, Fort Wayne, Gary
- USCCB, Catholic Social Services, Indianapolis
- CWS/EMM, Exodus Refugee/Immigration, Inc., Indianapolis
- World Relief, Fort Wayne

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history.

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10 http://www.stjoe-redcross.org/refugee-success-stories
The US Resettlement Program in Iowa

Refugee Population in Iowa:
The State of Iowa/Bureau of Refugee Services has resettled over 20,000 refugees in Iowa since 1983. During the 1970s and 1980s, most resettled refugees originated from Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. In the 1990s, Bosnian and Sudanese refugees began to arrive, and Iowa had one of the largest Sudanese populations in the US. An influx of Liberians and Somalis arrived in the early 2000s, and most recently, the majority of Iowan refugees originate from Iraq, Burma, Bhutan, and Somalia. Since 2004, Iowa has annually resettled 300 to 1,000 refugees. In FY 2011, Iowa received 331 refugees.

Services Available for Refugees:
The State of Iowa/Bureau of Refugee Services resettles refugees in the Des Moines Metropolitan area. The Bureau is federally funded by the Office of Refugee Resettlement to provide and coordinate post-resettlement services to refugees. These services include: basic needs support upon arrival, cultural orientation and referral services, bilingual staff assistance, case management services, employment services, English as a second language, skills training, and transportation. In addition, Iowa Department of Public Health established the Office of Multicultural Health (OMH) in an effort to increase access to culturally competent health care for Iowa’s minority, immigrant, and refugee populations. OMH encompasses the Refugee Health Program which ensures the complete health assessment for each arriving refugee, and assists healthcare providers and refugees in managing identified health problems.

Refugee Success Story:
Nermin Ferkic is a Bosnian refugee who came to America and resettled in the Cedar Valley of Iowa thirteen years ago. He was drafted in the Bosnian army right out of high school, fought in the civil war, and was shuttled between four refugee camps before finally resettling in the United States. He arrived here unable to speak English and with only $100 in his pocket. As he worked as a custodian, he would make a list of words from a dictionary and tape that list to the buffer he was running so he could study and memorize it. Within six months he was speaking English. Because of significant hearing loss due to the weapons he fired during the Bosnian conflict, he had to give up his dream of working for the FBI. But today, Nermin has a master's degree from the University of Northern Iowa, is planning to pursue his doctorate and is the public safety manager for Hawkeye Community College, as well as an adjunct teaching -- amazingly enough -- communications. 11

Local affiliates and offices of Voluntary Agencies in Iowa:

- **USCCB, Catholic Charities**, Des Moines, Cedar Rapids
- **USCRI, Des Moines**, Des Moines
- **LIRS, Lutheran Services in Iowa**, Des Moines as well as Waterloo.

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history.

11 http://wcfcourier.com/lifestyles/article_18fec8d0-232c-11e0-b077-001cc4c002e0.html
The US Resettlement Program in Kansas

Refugee Population in Kansas:
Kansas has received over 2,420 refugees since 2001, with 327 refugees resettled in FY 2011. Refugees arrive in Kansas from many areas of the world, forced to flee their native lands because of the persecution they have endured on account of their beliefs, opinions or ethnic heritage. The majority of refugees being resettled in Kansas are Iraqi, Bhutanese, Burmese, or Somali. Somali refugees also come to Kansas as a consequence of secondary migration (i.e. from MN or Seattle) to work in the meatpacking industry. Most refugees are resettled in the Kansas City (Johnson and Wyandotte Counties) and Wichita areas.

Services Available to Refugees in Kansas:
The Kansas Refugee Program (KRP) is administered under the Kansas Department of Social & Rehabilitation Services (SRS). KRP oversees cash assistance programs including TANF, the Health Wave program, Food Assistance, Child Care, Medicaid, MediKan and General Assistance. Some refugees may be eligible to receive Refugee Cash Assistance and Refugee Medical Assistance (RCA/RMA) for their first eight months in the U.S. The Kansas Refugee Program supervises the administration of the Refugee Social Service Program (RSS) and the Refugee Resettlement Program (RRP). RSS provides employment services to eligible applicants. The Refugee Health Program is one part of RRP administered by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) Bureau of Local and Rural Health in cooperation with Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services (SRS).

Refugee Success Story:
Andrew Zarda is the owner of Harvest Hiring and a 2009 School of Business graduate from Kansas University, and he is dedicated to helping refugees resettle in Kansas. He drives employees such as Shyiam Khanal, a refugee from Bhutan, to and from temporary jobs in Kansas City, four to five days a week. Khanal has a daughter that is a senior in high school and interested in journalism. Bhutan is a small Buddhist country in between China and India. Many Bhutanese refugees are now in the United States after spending many years in Nepali displacement camps when trying to escape the government and conflict in the 1980s. Harvest Hiring is a contract labor company that trains and connects Bhutanese refugees with employers seeking additional labor. Zarda recognizes that refugees in the United States have a hard time with challenges such as health care, education, and employment. Refugees in Bhutan are either born without citizenship in displacement camps or lost citizenship during the conflict in Bhutan. Many are happy to receive their first wages in 20 years coming from a country with a caste system.\(^\text{12}\)

Local affiliates and offices of Voluntary Agencies in Kansas:
Voluntary Agencies provide resettlement services that include core services provided within the first 90 days if arrival in the U.S. These services include reception and placement services; counseling and referral services in the areas of orientation, health, employment, and coordination with local services; and assistance to children separated from parents. Each Voluntary Agency provides a variety of optional services beyond these core services as the individual agency’s ability permits.

- **USCCB, Catholic Agency for Migration & Refugee Services**, Garden City
- **USCCB, Catholic Charities, Archdiocese of Kansas City**, Northeastern Kansas
- **USCCB, Catholic Charities of Wichita**, Central Kansas.
- **IRC, International Rescue Committee**, Wichita
- **EMM, Episcopal Wichita Area Refugee Ministry (EWARM)**, Central Kansas

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history.

The U.S. Resettlement Program for Kentucky

Kentucky Refugee Population:
In FY 2011, Kentucky resettled a total of 1,363 refugees. Kentucky has averaged over 1,100 refugees resettling there between 2005 and 2011. The predominant countries of origin for the refugees in 2011 were Burma, Bhutan and Iraq, totaling 496, 344, and 186 respectively. Refugee resettlement agencies are located in Louisville, Lexington and Bowling Green, and Owensboro. Kentucky has been one of the major destinations following the decision to spread refugee resettlement outside of the traditional major cities such as New York and Los Angeles. In 2011, Kentucky resettled the 17th most refugees in the country. Louisville has exponentially grown in the number of foreign born residents. In 2008, the foreign born population was 4% of the total population, growing 57% from 2000.

Services for Refugees:
The Kentucky Office of Refugees, a department of the Catholic Charities of Louisville, acts as Kentucky’s State Refugee Coordinator office. Since 1992, Kentucky’s refugee program is operated by what is known as a Wilson/Fish Program, or alternative to state-run refugee assistance programs. This office manages the approximately 8 million dollars in funding from the Office of Refugee Resettlement and distributes it to assist in resettlement, health services, ESL and cash assistance. Through this office refugees are able to get the same benefits that they would receive from a state run program. The Refugee Health Program, a part of the Kentucky Office for Refugees, works to improve the health of refugee communities in Kentucky. The Refugee Health Program works with a network of health care providers and resettlement agencies to identify and address health needs of eligible refugee populations through screening, education, care coordination, outreach and advocacy.

Refugee Success Story:
David Keough-Toyo and his family fled civil strife in Togo eleven years ago, and with the help of a local Episcopal church were resettled in Louisville. David worked 16 hours a day for $7.65 an hour to support himself, his wife, their five children, and his sister. As part of the Assets for Independence program David was able to take classes on economic independence, budgeting, and saving, while learning English at the same time. David took the lessons to heart and has been one of the programs best savers. Just three years later he owns a house large enough to fit his family, has helped translate the course for his sister, and sits down with his children to explain the family budget so that they too can learn the importance of budgeting and saving. David’s next goal is to save enough so that he and his family can get a secondary education.13

Local affiliates and offices of Voluntary Agencies in Kentucky:
- USCRI, Western Kentucky Refugee Mutual Assistance, Bowling Green
- USCRI, International Center, Owensboro
- CWS/EMM, Kentucky Refugee Ministries, Inc., Lexington
- CWS/EMM, Kentucky Refugee Ministries, Inc. (Main office), Louisville
- USCCB, Catholic Charities, Louisville

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history.

The US Resettlement Program in Louisiana

Refugee Population of Louisiana:
In 2011, 272 refugees/asylees were resettled in Louisiana. The majority of the resettled refugees/asylees were Burmese, Iraqi, Cuban, Bhutanese, Congolese and Somali. Approximately half of the overall refugee/asylee population has resettled in New Orleans or the city’s surrounding areas.

Services Available to Refugees:
Louisiana’s Refugee Resettlement Program has been contracted through Catholic Charities USA and Catholic Community Services, Migration & Refugee Services since 1975. Louisiana has seven different refugee resettlement sites: Baton Rouge, Shreveport, Alexandria, Lake Charles, Lafayette, Houma, and New Orleans. Each resettlement site’s mission is to develop and provide resettlement opportunities to incoming refugees and to assist the refugees towards economic self-sufficiency through the provision of social services including English as a second language and employment services. Louisiana’s refugee program is operated by what is known as a Wilson/Fish Program, or alternative to state-run refugee assistance programs.

Services Provided:
Case workers at Catholic Charities, most of them former refugees themselves, act as guides to American life for the arriving refugees. Services provided to refugees in Louisiana include language training, social and medical services, counseling, job placement, family reunification, sponsorship development, and citizenship preparation. Muslim refugees are often directed to the Islamic Center of Baton Rouge which provides them with additional, however informal, assistance.

Refugee Success Story:
Mariam Kurdadze moved from Tbilis, the capital of the Republic of Georgia, as an evacuee in 2008, as her home country was flaring up in a war against the Russian Army. She moved to the United States to play tennis at Tulane. Mariam has spent the last four years as a star tennis player for their team. Her presence has uplifted the program in their attempt to recover from the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Mariam has been a model student-athlete during her tenure at Tulane. Her personality and spirit are infectious and she leaves a lasting impression on those she touches. Mariam is set to enroll in Tulane’s business school this summer after a trip home, and plans to work with Tulane’s sports information department to help promote the tennis program.14

Local Affiliates and Offices of Voluntary Assistance in Louisiana:
• USCCB, Migration & Refugee Services, Baton Rouge
• USCCB, Migration & Refugee Services, Lafayette
• USCCB, Immigration & Refugee Services, New Orleans
• USCCB, Resettlement Center of Central LA, Inc., Alexandria

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history.

The US Resettlement Program in Maine

Refugee Population of Maine:
Since 2001, Maine received over 1,500 primary refugees. In addition to that population, about 1,200 secondary migrants resettle in Maine per year. Secondary migrants make up 40-50% of new Mainers, and 80% of Maine’s immigration population is due to secondary migration.\(^{15}\) The diversity of the refugees resettled in Maine closely reflects the quotas set annually by the President. Maine’s refugee and immigrant community has mainly resettled in the greater Portland area as well as Lewiston and Auburn. Since 2001, Lewiston specifically is a destination for refugees and immigrants. The previously decaying city of Lewiston was discovered by Somali refugees who have transformed the city making it home to over 2,500 primary and secondary migrants since 2001. Refugees have noticeably improved commerce in the sparsely populated state.

Services Available to Refugees in Maine:
Catholic Charities Maine Refugee and Immigration Services (RIS), the only agency in the state authorized to administer the federal program, has been the primary refugee resettlement agency in the state since 1975. The organization receives funding through federal government grants, Maine’s Department of Health and Human Services, Maine’s office of Multicultural Affairs, parishes, corporations, community organization, and individuals. RIS’ primary resettlement goal for each new arrival is self-sufficiency. RIS staff provides cultural orientations, life skills, and ongoing case management, as needed to support activities with refugees who have been in the U.S. for five years or less. More than 6,000 newcomers from two dozen countries of Southeast Asia, Africa, the Near East, Eastern Europe, Cuba, and the former Soviet Republics have been assisted by Catholic Charities’ services to begin new lives in Maine. Because much of Maine’s immigration population is secondary migrants, it should be noted that refugee resettlement funds are given only at the initial resettlement site. However, secondary migrants do rely on a combination of State and City assistance.

Refugee Success Story:
El-Fadel was born in Darfur, Sudan in 1984 and grew up in a world of turmoil and genocide. He narrowly escaped murder at the age of twelve years old and lived in Sudan over the next few years alone, poor, and forced into child slavery. After being recognized by the United Nations as a refugee, he came to the city of Portland in 2004 and was tearfully united with his family members that lived in Portland and that he had not seen for fifteen years. During the first couple of years in the U.S., he would work seven days a week and sixteen hours a day because he needed the money and because he needed to keep busy to keep the violent images out of his head. He has actively pursued his goal of bringing the community together and raising awareness about Darfur around the United States. He is the volunteer speaker of the Fur Cultural Revival organization. Schools and institutions all around the country invite him to come and speak, and he has received over 500 letters from audience members who claim that his speech was moving and inspirational. Despite the struggles he faces trying to raise awareness in Maine, he still believes that people everywhere should be actively working to stop genocide. It does not matter what skin color you are or what country you are from. He thinks the biggest obstacle to spreading awareness would be that Darfur seems so far away from the lives of Americans living in Maine and anywhere in general.\(^{16}\)

Local affiliates and offices of Voluntary Agencies in Maine:
- USCCB, Catholic Charities Maine, Portland

Services Provided by Catholic Charities:
- Airport Reception
- Resettlement and limited ongoing case management
- Referral for education and vocational training
- Assistance with family reunification
- Medical and mental health referrals
- Language interpretation and translation
- Assurance of basic needs: food, clothing, housing, furniture
- Community, cultural, and employment orientation
- Employment development and placement
- Referral for English as a second language tutoring
- Liaison with other service providers
- Advocacy and community outreach

In addition to this agency, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history.

Refugees in Maryland:
The Maryland Office for Refugees and Asylees (MORA) has helped more than 40,000 refugees in Maryland, aiding their transition from “displaced persons” to independent, contributing members of the local economy and community. Working through a network of dedicated service providers, MORA plans, administers, and coordinates transitional services aimed at helping refugees become self-sufficient as quickly as they can.

Services Available to Refugees:
MORA administers services to refugees in Maryland through the following programs:

- **Refugee Health Screening**: provides medical screenings to refugees within 90 days of arrival in the United States.
- **Refugee Employment Services**: Promotes refugee employment in the first eight months of residence. Services such as ‘career laddering’ and recertification remain available to refugees for up to five years after arrival.
- **Refugee English Language Instruction**: Free intensive English language instruction with an emphasis on life skills and the American workplace.
- **Refugee Youth Project**: An after-school enrichment program designed to ease the transition of refugee children and teens into the American educational system by strengthening academic skills, involving parents and educating teachers.
- **Citizenship for Elderly Refugees**: Specialized English language instruction and U.S. civics and history content to elderly refugees who wish to take the naturalization test and become U.S. citizens.
- **Public Private Partnership (PPP)**: Located at two one-stop sites, the Baltimore Resettlement Center, and the Suburban Washington Resettlement Center, the PPP unites government and nonprofit agencies in providing a range of linguistically and culturally appropriate services to refugees and asylees. Services include case management, cultural orientation, employment services, healthcare and social services.

Refugee Success Story:
In February 2006 Sawsan Al-Sayyab’s home in Iraq was bombed as part of a violent conflict between rival militia angry over the bombing of the holy Shia al-Askari mosque. As she stepped outside her home amid the violence, she saw debris covering the streets, mosques burning, and the roof of her house crumbling over her head. The violence became so bad she—like tens of thousands of others—fled to Jordan. Al-Sayyab was eventually resettled in Maryland, where she now works at the International Rescue Committee, able to help others in similarly desperate conditions.17

Local Affiliates and Offices of Voluntary Agencies in Maryland:
- **IRC, International Rescue Committee**, Baltimore
- **IRC, International Rescue Committee**, Silver Spring
- **LIRS, Lutheran Social Services of the Capital Area**, Silver Spring
- **ECDC, African Community Center**, Silver Spring
- **HIAS, Jewish Community Services**, Baltimore
- **HIAS, JSSA Newcomer Resettlement**, Rockville

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community's cultural identity and history. There are also facilities that specialize in assisting refugees that were victims of torture, such as Advocates for Survivors of Torture and Trauma, and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, both in Baltimore.

The US Resettlement Program in Massachusetts

Refugee Population in Massachusetts:
Since 2001, Massachusetts has resettled over 13,760 refugees. The largest groups are currently coming from Iraq, Bhutan, Burma, and Somalia. Refugees are evenly spread out through the different regions in Massachusetts, with the least refugees settling in Merrimack Valley. Currently, there are 300,000 Haitians that have been approved for visas, but they are still waiting for entry into the United States. Massachusetts officials are doing all that they can and promising that the state will continue to help refugees and their families arrive to Massachusetts, especially those in Haiti after the devastating earthquake of 2010.18

Services Available for Refugees in Massachusetts:
The Massachusetts Refugee Resettlement Program (MRRP) is a program to help newly arrived refugees become self-sufficient. The program’s main goal is to help refugees get jobs and learn English, so they can support themselves as soon as possible. The Massachusetts Office of Refugees and Immigrants (ORI) is the state agency in charge of this program in what is known as a Wilson/Fish Program, or alternative to state-run refugee assistance programs. Local resettlement agencies provide the services. All refugees taking part in the MRRP get case management services and employment services, including English language instruction if needed. Some refugees also get Refugee Cash and Medical Assistance. Many refugees qualify for public benefits such as TAFDC or SSI cash assistance, housing assistance, food stamps, fuel and utility assistance, child care, and MassHealth. To get MRRP benefits, refugees must abide by the rules of the program. Services for refugees may include: Cash Assistance, Case Management Services, Refugee Employment Services, and Massachusetts Refugee Agriculture Program (MRAP).

Refugee Success Story:
When a rock with a death threat wrapped around it was thrown into her house in Baghdad, Saba Al Khadady, 31, and her family knew it was time to leave Iraq. The threat, which said “either you leave or will die,” prompted Al Khadady and her family to pack their bags and head to Syria. Al Khadady, who is part of the Mandeane religious minority, says she believes her religion might have been the cause behind the violence against her family. Once in Syria, Al Khadady explains, refugees work with UNHCR to be relocated to more permanent homes. “We wanted to be resettled in any place, to tell you the truth. Any place would be fine as long as we will not be afraid or forced to leave, or we will be safe to live our life, continue the education, work, anything.” The Al Khadady family moved to the United States in May 2008 and was relocated to Worcester, Mass. by Lutheran Social Services. 22 percent of new arrivals in Massachusetts are from Iraq. Since arriving, Al Khadady has found two stable jobs—one as a professor at Worcester State University and the other as a Case Management Coordinator at Lutheran Social Services. She said that although she misses Iraq, Worcester now feels like home.19

Local affiliates and offices of Voluntary Agencies in Massachusetts:
- USCCB, Catholic Charitable Bureau, Archdiocese of Boston, Boston
- USCCB, Catholic Charities, Worcester
- USCRI, International Institute of Boston, Boston
- USCRI, International Institute of Lowell, Lowell
- The International Rescue Committee, Boston
- HIAS, Jewish Family Service, Framingham
- HIAS, Jewish Family Service, Springfield
- HIAS, Jewish Family and Children’s Service, Lynn
- CWS/EMM/LIRS, Lutheran Community Services of Southern New England, West Springfield
- CWS/EMM, Refugee Immigration Ministry, Malden, MA
- ECDC, Refugee and Immigrant Assistance Center, Jamaica Plain, Worcester

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history. There are also facilities that specialize in assisting refugees that were victims of torture, such as Boston Center for Refugee Health and Human Rights in Boston, and Harvard Program in Refugee Trauma in Cambridge, and Community Legal Services and Counseling Center in Cambridge.

The US Resettlement Program in Michigan

Refugee Population of Michigan:
Michigan has received over 21,000 refugees since 2001. The largest refugee groups are currently coming from Iraq, Burma, and Bhutan. During FY 2011, 2,587 refugees arrived in Michigan, 4.6 percent of all refugees resettled in the United States that year. Michigan and Detroit in particular are home to a large Iraqi population. Last year, the State Department decided to relax a two year-old rule that had limited the refugees allowed to resettle in Detroit to those with immediate relatives in the city. As of 2010, refugees with local ties to any friends or relatives in Detroit are once again allowed to resettle there. Refugees without local ties to family or friends are still not able to resettle there.

Services Available to Refugees in Michigan:
The U.S. Refugee Program in Michigan is administered by the Michigan Department of Human Services and is funded 100% by federal funding. Refugees/asylees, Cuban/Haitian entrants, Amerasians, parolees and victims of human trafficking are eligible for the Refugee Assistance Program (RAP). Michigan requires that RAP recipients be Michigan residents and intend to remain in Michigan and not be receiving cash assistance from another state.

The Department of Human Services administered grants and projects in FY 2011 to increase family self-sufficiency, assist older refugees, assist school age refugees through the School Impact program, and increase employment opportunities for Bosnian and Iraqi refugees who have lived in the United States for more than five years and are currently living in the Detroit area.

The state of Michigan also has an Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Foster Care Program, which provides foster care services for refugee children who have come to U.S. without parents or a close relative to care for them.

Refugee Success Story:
Miguel Abrahantes grew up a Catholic in Cuba where he and his family were forced to practice their religion in secret for fear of punishment by the government. In 2000 after completing an engineering doctorate degree in Argentina he got on a plane to Miami and sought asylum. He was then resettled as a refugee in Michigan with the help of Bethany Christian Services. He took a job working on an assembly line at night and studying English in the morning. Within a year he had earned a research position at Indiana University. A year later he returned to Michigan and began teaching at Davenport University. In 2004 he accepted a position at Hope College teaching electronics engineering and doing a part-time research project for NASA, where he is developing a mobility system for robots for planet exploration called a Tetwalker. Miguel, now a naturalized citizen, continues to practice Catholicism and met his wife at a Catholic spiritual retreat in 2003. They have two children together, a son and a daughter.

Local affiliates and offices of Voluntary Agencies in Michigan:

- HIAS, Jewish Family Services, Ann Arbor
- LIRS, Lutheran Social Services of Michigan, Battle Creek
- USCRI, Dearborn
- CWS, PARA Refugee Services, Grand Rapids
- LIRS, Lutheran Social Services of Michigan, Grand Rapids
- LIRS/EMM, Lutheran Social Services of Michigan, Southfield
- USCCB, Refugee Services, Lansing
- HIAS, Jewish Family Service (Detroit Metropolitan Area), West Bloomfield
- Bethany Christian Services, Grand Rapids
- Wayne State University, Detroit
- ACCESS Rehabilitation Center, Dearborn

Torture Treatment Centers in Michigan
- Bethany Christian Services, Grand Rapids
- Wayne State University, Detroit
- ACCESS Rehabilitation Center, Dearborn

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history.

20 http://www.mlive.com/living/grand-rapids/index.ssf/2012/01/cuban_immigrant_becomes_hope_c.html
Refugee Population of Minnesota:
Historically Minnesota has had the highest number of refugees per capita – two Minneapolis suburbs are each now 25% African. Minnesota has received over 26,400 refugees since 2001 and over 90,000 since 1979, who have come from about 30 different countries of origin. The largest refugee groups are currently coming from Somalia and Burma. During FY 2011, 1,840 refugees arrived in Minnesota. In addition, Minnesota has the highest secondary arrivals from other states. Minneapolis is also home to the largest group of Somalis in the US.

Services Available to Refugees in Minnesota:
The U.S. Refugee Program in Minnesota is administered by the Minnesota Department of Human Services through a partnership between public and private service providers and is funded 100% by federal funding. Refugees/asylees, Cuban/Haitian entrants, Amerasians, parolees and victims of human trafficking are eligible for the Refugee Assistance Program (RAP). Upon first arrival, refugees have access to food, shelter, medical screening, and social services. Refugee families with minor children can qualify for cash and medical assistance programs such as the Minnesota Family Investment Program (the state’s Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) and Medical Assistance (MA). Refugees without children and with incomes at or below 75 percent of the federal poverty guideline are also eligible for MA since March 1, 2011. Refugees who are without minor children and are otherwise eligible for MA are eligible for Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) and Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA). These programs are only available for the first eight months after arrival.

Programs from the Minnesota Refugee Resettlement Program (RSP):
Minnesota’s RSP is so designed that refugee families must achieve six outcome domains which are: stable housing, adjustment of immigration status, maximum participation in public and community programs, independent functioning and stable economic supports. A network of providers consisting of Mutual Assistance Associations, local affiliates of national voluntary agencies, counties and other social service agencies non-profits are contracted to provide an array of services such as job search assistance, on-the-job training, transitional work, housing, information and referral, education, immigration and naturalization, translation and interpretation assistance. Eligibility for services is limited to refugees during their first five years in this country except for some programs which are funded under discretionary grants.

Refugee Success Story:
Abdifatah Farah is a spoken word artist in Minneapolis. He fled Somalia to Dadaab, Kenya, and lived in a refugee camp there for 5 years before moving to the US. He organized a trip back to the refugee camp in Dadaab to put together stories and videos of what life is like in the camp there. The project is called “Voices of Dadaab”. He believes that the power of the human voice can bring change and give these people hope despite their circumstances.*

Local affiliates and offices of Voluntary Agencies in Minnesota:
- USCCB, Catholic Charities of Minneapolis and St. Paul
- USCCB, Catholic Charities of Rochester
- USCRI, International Institute of Minnesota, St. Paul
- LIRS, Lutheran Social Services of Minnesota, Minneapolis
- WR, World Relief Minnesota in Minneapolis
- WR, World Relief Minnesota in St. Paul
- CWS/EMM, Minnesota Council of Churches, Refugee Services, Minneapolis
- HIAS, Jewish Family and Children’s Service of Minneapolis, Minnetonka

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history. There are also facilities that specialize in assisting refugees that were victims of torture, such as the Center for Victims of Torture in Minneapolis.

The US Resettlement Program in Missouri

Refugee Population of Missouri:
Missouri has received over 11,280 refugees since 2001. The largest refugee groups are currently coming from Burma, Bhutan, Somalia, and Iraq. During FY 2011, 941 refugees were resettled in Missouri.

Services and benefits are provided to refugees in Missouri by the Missouri Department of Social Services.
The goal of Refugee Resettlement is to assist in the resettlement of refugees in Missouri and to promote economic self-sufficiency as quickly as possible. This is accomplished by providing social and employment services, as well as financial and medical assistance, through programs provided by the Missouri Departments of Social Services, Health and Senior Services, Elementary and Secondary Education, and contracting agencies.

Available Benefits and Services:
Missouri Department of Social Services, Family Support Division- Individuals and families may receive:

- **Refugee Cash Assistance**: available for those not eligible for other forms of cash assistance (Temporary Assistance, Supplemental Security Income), for up to eight months from date of entry to the U.S. Cash benefits are based on the Temporary Assistance levels of payment.
- **Refugee Medical Assistance**: is available for those not eligible for other forms of MO HealthNet Assistance, for eight months from date of entry to the U.S.

Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education- Administers the *School Impact Program*, which supports impacted school districts with funds to assist with activities that lead to effective integration and education of refugee children. This targets school-age refugees with activities that include, but are not limited to, programs such as English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction, after-school tutorials, parental involvement programs, and summer clubs and activities.

Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services- Administers the *Preventative Health Program*, which provides medical screenings and follow-up activities to newly arriving refugees. The program objectives are to reduce the spread of infectious disease, treat current ailments, and promote preventative health practices to facilitate refugees’ full participation in activities that encourage self-sufficiency and integration.

Contracting Refugee Resettlement Agencies - Provide individuals and families services throughout the state in the following programs:

- Social Services
- Targeted Assistance Formula
- Targeted Assistance Discretionary
- Services to Older Refugees

Refugee Success Story in Missouri:
Caritas Habimana grew up in the Congo. Her father was a doctor, she attended good schools, and learned how to speak multiple languages. Fluent in French, she was offered a position at the embassy in Rwanda, where she got married and had a family. But during the Rwandan genocide, her family was threatened, and they had to go into hiding, living in the small closet of a relative for three months. She eventually found her way to a refugee camp in Kenya, and was reunited with her family after they had been separated for five months. She was resettled into Columbia, and has now lived in Missouri for 15 years. She became fluent in English in just a year, and has now dedicated her life to helping other refugees coming from Africa. She teaches English to refugees, works as an interpreter, and also operates an after-school program for refugee children. She realized she wanted to do something to help her people, and states “Why do I have to go to Africa when Africa is here?”

Local affiliates and offices of Voluntary Agencies in Missouri:

- USCCB, Catholic Charities Refugee Services, St. Louis
- USCCB, Catholic Charities of Central and Northern Missouri, Refugee and Immigration Services, Columbia, Jefferson City
- USCRI, International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis, St. Louis, Springfield
- USCRI, Jewish Vocational Service, Kansas City
- ECDC, Somali Foundation, Kansas City

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history.

The US Resettlement Program in New Hampshire

Refugees in New Hampshire:
Since the early 1980’s more than 6,500 refugees have made New Hampshire their home. Refugees have greatly contributed to the state and local communities. Through their hard work, they have strengthened the economy and their presence has enriched the cultural diversity of New Hampshire. Refugees come to New Hampshire from more than 30 different nations and represent a diverse group of ethnic minorities. Many of New Hampshire’s refugees live in Hillsborough County, with significant resettlement also in the Concord, Franklin and Laconia areas.

The New Hampshire Refugee Program:
The New Hampshire Refugee Program, within the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Minority Health and Refugee Affairs, provides federally funded services to refugees resettled in the State of New Hampshire in accordance with federal statutes. The major goal of this program is to assist refugees in achieving economic self-sufficiency and social adjustment upon arrival to the United States. More than 500 refugees a year are resettled in New Hampshire through two agencies, Lutheran Social Services of New England and the International Institute of New Hampshire. These nonprofit agencies receive US Department of State, Bureau of Population and Migration funding. Additional money is provided by the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement to provide self-sufficiency services. These services include:

- **Case Management**: Resettlement agencies facilitate and coordinate a variety of services including housing, healthcare, referrals and general support services as refugees transition into their communities.
- **Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) and Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA)**: Funds are designed to assist refugees during their initial resettlement period. All refugees are entitled to Refugee Medical Assistance for their first eight months in the US. To be eligible for RCA, however, a refugee must be ineligible for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).
- **English as a Second Language**: Voluntary agencies collectively provide over 90 hours a week in English Language Training throughout New Hampshire.
- **Employment Services**: These include an assessment of vocational skills, job development, job placement, and follow up services with local employers.
- **Preventive Health**: The primary goal of the program is to prevent and control problems of public health significance among incoming refugees, with emphasis on those health problems that may create barriers to self-sufficiency. The program ensures that refugees have access to health education, case management and interpreter services.

Refugee Success Story:
Colette Ramazani lived in Rwanda but fled to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in 1994 when the Rwandan genocide erupted. In 1996 the Rwandan tensions overflowed into the DRC and began a civil war. A second civil war is still ongoing and is referred to as the Great African War. During the second civil war Ms. Ramazani was working for the rebel government when she began to fear for her life. She was so afraid she carried her passport on her at all times so that if she was killed her body could be identified and her family notified. She eventually found her way to a refugee camp in Kenya before being resettled in New Hampshire in 2000. She suffered from severe Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) after her ordeal but luckily her local resettlement agency helped her find a therapist who has helped her learn how to handle her PTSD. She still struggles with her fears in large crowds but has healed enough that she feels comfortable in most situations and she is now studying for her Masters in Global Business at Southern New Hampshire University.

Local affiliates/offices in New Hampshire:
- **USCRI**, The International Institute of New Hampshire, Manchester
- **CWS, EMM and LSS**, Interfaith Refugee Resettlement Program, Concord
- **USCCB**, Catholic Charities of New Hampshire, Manchester

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history.

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The US Resettlement Program in New Jersey

Refugee Population of New Jersey:
A total of 42,840 refugees were resettled in New Jersey from 1983 to 2011. In FY 2011, 383 refugees were resettled in New Jersey from 15 countries of origin. Most of the refugees came from Cuba (41%), Iraq (18%), Burma, and Bhutan. This represents a decrease from the 1,605 refugees that were resettled in New Jersey in FY 2000. At that time, the majority of refugees came from Cuba (29%), with a sizable portion coming from former Yugoslavia (23%) and the former Soviet Union.

State Resettlement Program:
The Refugee Resettlement Program, which is administered by the New Jersey Division of Family Development of the Department of Human Services, is a federally funded program that provides cash and medical assistance to refugees. Only single individuals or couples without children are eligible for this program, which is administered by the county welfare agencies for up to eight months, based on the refugee's date of entry into this country. All other refugees, if otherwise eligible, can receive assistance under the Work First New Jersey program.

Refugee Success Story:
After three and a half months in Vietnamese prison camps resulting from three unsuccessful attempts to flee, Emily Vu escaped communist Vietnam in 1987 at the age of ten, traveling through Cambodia to spend over three years in a refugee camp in Malaysia, until she and her mother were eventually resettled in New Jersey. Even though she lost six years of education because of the ordeal, she wasted no time in catching up, working as a casino hotel cashier while getting her bachelor’s degree at Richard Stockton College. By 25, she had earned her CPA degree and a master’s in business administration. Today, she is the owner of an accounting firm with three accountants providing tax services, bookkeeping and payroll to small and mid-sized businesses, she’s working on her doctorate, and she teaches as an assistant professor at Lincoln University in Pennsylvania. Her mother lives with Vu and her husband, which helps connect her two daughters, ages 4 and 5, with the family’s old and new lives.

Local affiliates and offices of Voluntary Agencies in New Jersey:
- USCCB, Catholic Charities, Atlantic City
- USCCB, Refugee and Immigration Services, Camden
- USCRI, International Institute of New Jersey, Jersey City
- USCCB, Catholic Community Services, Newark
- HIAS, Jewish Family Service (Bergen County), Teaneck
- HIAS, Jewish Vocational Service, East Orange
- HIAS, Jewish Family and Vocational Service, Milltown
- USCCB, Migration and Refugee Services, Trenton
- IRC, International Rescue Committee, Elizabeth

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history. There are also facilities that specialize in assisting refugees that were victims of torture, such as Libertas Center for Survivors of Torture in Elmhurst.

23 http://www.pressofatlanticcity.com
Refugee Population of New York:
New York State is home to one of the largest resettled refugee populations in the US. Since 2001, over 35,000 refugees have been resettled to the state. In FY 2011, the state of New York received 3,531 refugees, 6.3 percent of the total number of refugee arrivals in the US. The top countries of origin for FY 2011 were Burma, Bhutan, Iraq, and Somalia. Of the FY 11 refugees, 90% were resettled in Upstate New York (particularly in Albany, Erie, Onondaga, Oneida, and Monroe Counties). The other 10% were resettled in New York City. New York is also home to headquarters offices for Church World Service, the International Rescue Committee, Hebrew Immigration Aid Society, and the Episcopal Church.

The New York State Bureau of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance administers several programs serving refugees including:
- **State Refugee Resettlement Assistance Program** provides additional support services in order to fill service gaps not covered by other programs, so that refugees may attain self-sufficiency.
- **Refugee Social Services Program** provides employment preparation and placements, and transitional supports to help with any impediments to employment and self-sufficiency.
- **Refugee Health Screening and Refugee Preventive Health Programs** introduce newly arrived refugees to the United States health care system.
- **Refugee School Impact Grant** provides services that help refugee children and their families adjust to American schools.
- **Refugee Cash Assistance and Refugee Medical Assistance** provides temporary assistance for refugees who are not eligible for other federal cash or medical assistance programs, within eight months of being granted an eligible status.
- **Unaccompanied Refugee/Entrant Minors Program** provides foster care and other services and benefits to refugee, victims of trafficking and unaccompanied alien minors.
- **State Intensive Employment Program for Refugees Living with Disabilities** promotes the integration of refugees with physical and developmental disabilities into mainstream U.S. culture.
- **Targeted Assistance** provides job training and placements and services directed toward assisting eligible refugees to reach self-sufficiency.

Refugee Success Story:
When Win Myint, a Burmese refugee, was four-years-old he hiked through the jungle everyday with other young boys to chop down bamboo and drag it back to his village for his mother to sell. Often, he returned to his village to the sound of gunshots and violence. Finally, fearing for the safety on her family, Win’s mother decided to flee the violence in Burma and took him and his sister to live in a refugee camp in Thailand, where they applied for refugee status with UNHCR, and eventually entered the resettlement program in United States. They were resettled as refugees in Rensselaer, NY, where his mother found work at Integrated Liner Technologies in Albany and now, rather than work in the jungle, Win and his sister attend Rensselaer High School where Win has become a top member of the school’s varsity wrestling team.  

Local affiliates and offices of Voluntary Agencies in New York:
- USCRI, Albany, Albany
- USCRI, American Civic Association, Binghamton
- USCRI, CAMBA, Brooklyn
- USCRI, International Institute of Buffalo, Buffalo
- USCCB, Catholic Charities of Buffalo, Buffalo
- USCCB, Catholic Charities of Brooklyn/Queens, Brooklyn
- USCCB, Catholic Charities Community Services, New York
- USCCB, Catholic Charities of Rockville Centre, Amityville
- USCCB, Catholic Charities of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Syracuse, Syracuse, NY
- LIRS, Lutheran Social Services of Metropolitan New York, New York
- LIRS, Mohawk Valley Resource Center, Utica
- USCCB/CWS, Catholic Family Center, Rochester
- CWS/EMM, Journey’s End Refugee Services, Inc., Buffalo
- CWS/EMM, Interfaith Works of Central New York, Syracuse
- HIAS, Jewish Family Service, Buffalo
- HIAS, FEGS Health and Human Services, New York City
- IRC, International Rescue Committee New York, New York

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history. There are also facilities that specialize in assisting refugees that were victims of torture, such as the Bellevue/NYU Program for Survivors of Torture in New York, HealthRight International in New York, and International Trauma Studies Program-REFUGE in New York.

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Refugee Population of North Dakota:
Refugee resettlements started in North Dakota in 1946 by assisting eastern European displaced persons establish a new life. In most recent years, since 2001, North Dakota has received 8,462 refugees. Refugees arrive in North Dakota from many areas of the world, forced to flee their native lands because of the persecution they have endured on account of their beliefs, opinions or ethnic heritage. The largest groups are currently coming from Iraq, Bhutan, and Somalia. In 2010, 171 newly arrived refugees were employed representing about 60% of employment-eligible adults. Their average starting wage was $8.91 an hour, and about 90% of newly employed refugees stay at their job for more than three months, a good indication that they will keep their job. Refugees have been beneficial to the North Dakota economy because they have taken jobs in industries such as hospitality and light manufacturing that had employee shortages and required few English or technical skills. Refugees are also consumers, tax-payers, home-owners and businesses owners. The New American Services program of Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota helps refugees become integrated into their communities as productive, contributing members of society.

Services Available to Refugees in North Dakota: The New American program with Lutheran Social Services is currently authorized by the U.S. State Department to resettle refugees in Fargo, Grand Forks, and Bismarck. North Dakota’s refugee program operates in what is known as a Wilson-Fish agreement, or alternative to state-run refugee assistance programs. It is primarily funded by the federal government. The agency gets additional finances from volunteer help and private donors. The program looks to promote economic self-sufficiency for refugees entering the state within the shortest time possible. The agency contributes to the effective resettlement of refugees by providing case management, cash assistance, employment services, immigration services, and services to unaccompanied refugee minors. Other support services are provided through a network of service providers and include: English as a Second Language courses for adults and children, refugee school impact grants, vocational assessment and training, medical screening, preventative health, supplemental nutrition assistance program, self sufficiency services, and mentoring.

Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota also serves as coordinating agency for the state. They receive and review all refugee grant applications focused on the resettlement services and process award grants each year to the extent federal funding is available and within the published guidelines. Grant for Unaccompanied Refugee Minor program is awarded to the State of North Dakota, which in turn, contracts with LSS/ND to provide services to unaccompanied refugee minors.

Resettlement Agencies work with the U.S. government to help refugees establish a home in North Dakota after they are approved for admittance into our country. The goal of our work is to help refugees achieve economic self-sufficiency as soon as possible. Partnerships play a vital role in a successful resettlement experience. Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota is the only refugee resettlement agency in the state. They work with many state and local agencies including the North Dakota Department of Human Services, the public schools, churches, health care organizations, social service agencies, adult learning centers, civic groups, employers, volunteers, and mentors.

Refugee Success Story: Adam Sudi, arrived in Fargo, ND on May 13, 2011, from Jordan with his wife Samia and 2 year old daughter. The family is originally from Sudan. Adam started working at Northport Hornbacher’s in October, 2011. The position he was hired for was overnight stocking crew. His shift starts at 11:00 pm and ends at 5:00 am. Since he did not have any personal transportation, he left his house early to catch the bus and waited after his shift for the bus again, sometimes two hours before and two after. Adam never once complained about the transportation issue as he was so grateful to be working. Evelyn J. Brendemuhl of Hope, North Dakota, donated her 1992 Buick Station Wagon to Lutheran Social Services’ New American Service and asked the program to donate her car to a deserving family. Adam Sudi was a perfect fit for the donation since he had driven for many years in Sudan and Jordan and also received his ND driver’s license in December, 2011. On January 12, 2012, the car was donated to Adam. He is very excited and grateful for the donation, for work and new life in the United States.

Local affiliates and offices of Voluntary Agencies in North Dakota:
• LIRS, Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota, Fargo, Grand Forks, and Bismarck
• EMM, Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota, Fargo and Grand Forks

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history.
Refugee Population of North Carolina:
North Carolina has received over 11,900 refugees since 2001, including 2,128 in FY 2011. The largest refugee groups are Burmese and Bhutanese. Most refugees settle in Mecklenburg, Wake, Buncombe, Guilford and Craven counties. Guilford County is home to the state’s largest and most diverse refugee communities.

Services Available to Refugees in North Carolina:
The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services has a division that is the NC Refugee Assistance Program. The NC Refugee Assistance Program (RAP) consists of two primary service areas - refugee public assistance and refugee social services. The NC-RAP also includes other discretionary grant funded programs. They are: assistance to public schools for educational support to refugee children, targeted employment assistance in Guilford and Mecklenburg counties, aging services to older refugees, preventive health screening and targeted services to certain populations-the Hmong and Cuban/Haitians.

Local departments of social services and private-non-profit service agencies, under contract with the state, provide specialized services to refugees. In North Carolina, approximately 8,500 refugees receive services through local providers. In FY07, almost 900 adults received pre-employment services and 741 were placed in jobs with an average wage at placement of $8.29. Ninety-five percent (95%) of all refugees keep their jobs and are still working 3 months after initial placement. This means NC refugees have one of the highest job retention rates in the nation.

Refugee Public Assistance:
Refugee public assistance involves two programs - refugee cash assistance and refugee medical assistance. Refugees are eligible for up to eight months after arrival in the USA. Eligibility criteria parallel the state’s Medicaid and TANF programs. Refugee social services include employability services (help preparing for, obtaining and keeping a job), case management and other services such as English Language Training, interpreter services, citizenship preparation and orientation to the community.

Refugee Success Story:
Zaw is Burmese, but fled to Thailand after many of his friends were arrested, because the Burmese government does not recognize “freedom of speech.” Zaw joined the fight for democracy in Burma, but after he got married and had children, he realized that it was too dangerous for him to be an activist. They moved to a refugee camp in Thailand in 2006, where they lived in straw huts and could only eat basic rice meals provided by the UN. Eventually, they were cleared for resettlement in Chapel Hill, NC. They have become very involved in the local church, and have made many close relationships with families there. Zaw is studying to become a certified computer technician, and his son loves his new elementary school. They are all taking English classes, and he now sees this as the place where his family can finally settle down.*

Local affiliates and offices of Voluntary Agencies in North Carolina:

- WR, World Relief, Durham
- EMM, Interfaith Refugee Ministry, Wilmington
- HIAS, Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency, Charlotte
- USCCB, Refugee Resettlement Office, Charlotte
- CWS /IRP, Durham
- CWS/IRP, Greensboro
- ECDC, North Carolina African Services Coalition, Greensboro
- EMM, Diocese of E. Carolina Interfaith Refugee Ministry, New Bern
- WR, World Relief, High Point
- Interfaith Refugee Ministry, New Bern
- USCRI, Raleigh
- LIRS, Lutheran Family Services in the Carolinas, Raleigh, NC
- LIRS, Lutheran Family Services in the Carolinas, Greensboro

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history.

Refugees in Ohio:
Between 1983 and 2011, over 36,000 refugees were resettled in Ohio. They include refugees from Afghanistan, Burma, Iraq, Iran, former Soviet Union, former Yugoslavia, Somalia and a number of other African countries.

The Resettlement Program in Ohio:
The Ohio Refugee Services Program is part of an effort to help people displaced from their countries find a new home and a new life. The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) supervises a program of services and benefits designed to help refugees, asylees, Cuban/Haitian entrants, and selected others resettle in Ohio. ODJFS is supported in this effort by the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement within the Department of Health and Human Services, county departments of job and family services, resettlement agencies, and medical providers. The Refugee Services Section is the ODJFS unit responsible for coordination and administration of refugee services in Ohio.

Services and Benefits:
The goal of the Refugee Services Program is to help refugees and other vulnerable populations achieve economic self-sufficiency and social adjustment within the shortest time possible following their arrival in the U.S. Refugees are eligible for the following assistance:

**Refugee Cash Assistance:** Ohio operates a publicly administered cash assistance program for refugees modeled after the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, known as Ohio Works First (OWF). Refugees not eligible for TANF/OWF may receive refugee cash assistance for their first 8 months in the U.S.

**Refugee Medical Assistance:** If not eligible for Medicaid, refugees are eligible for refugee medical assistance for the first eight months after arriving in the U.S. They will receive a monthly card that provides the same medical coverage as provided by the Medicaid program. After refugee medical assistance is no longer available, refugees may be eligible for health care coverage under Medicaid.

Refugee Success Story:
The Lakewood School District entered into an agreement with the organization Asian Services in Action, which will offer after-school tutoring to refugee students from kindergarten through the 12th grade. The School District is getting some help teaching 80 refugee students who have settled in Lakewood from around the world. Assistant superintendent Kevin Bright stated the goal for the students is to accelerate assimilation and accelerate their learning. Some of the tools in ASA’s arsenal include computers, specialized software and leveled books. There are 183 refugees (in the Lakewood School District) and 95 percent of them were born in refugee camps. Lakewood schools spokeswoman Christine Gordillo called the partnership “a win-win for everybody. We’re trying our best to close the gap, while doing what our community does, which is help.”

Local affiliates and offices of Voluntary Agencies in Ohio:
- USCRI, International Institute of Akron, Akron
- USCRI, The International Services Center, Cleveland
- HIAS, US Together, Cleveland Heights (Cleveland office)
- HIAS, US Together, Columbus
- USCCB, Catholic Charities, Cincinnati
- USCCB, Migration and Refugee Services, Cleveland
- USCCB, Catholic Social Services, Dayton
- CWS/EMM, Community Refugee and Immigration Services, Columbus
- WR, World Relief of Columbus, Columbus

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOS) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history.

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Refugee Population in Oklahoma:
Oklahoma has resettled over 7,800 refugees since 1983. During these years, most resettled refugees originated from Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and the former USSR. Since 2007, Oklahoma has annually resettled over 150 refugees. In FY 2011, Oklahoma received 271 refugees.

Services Available for Refugees:
The Oklahoma Department of Human Services, Family Support Services Division (FSSD), oversees refugee resettlement in Oklahoma and is federally funded. The FSSD implements federal policy for Refugee Medical Assistance and works with county staff on policy and procedures. FSSD also coordinates with Oklahoma Catholic Charities for the provision of Refugee Cash Assistance and contracts with providers for employment, English language and social adjustment services.

Refugee Success Story:
Tluang Bawi grew up a Christian in Myanmar where his family could not celebrate holidays or worship without the fear of being killed. Bawi knew that if he stayed in Myanmar, he and his family would likely be killed so they decided to flee. They were on the run for a year. First they tried to go to India, but were denied entry. They then trekked back across Myanmar to Thailand, and after that to Malaysia. They lived there for nearly five years. Almost six years ago, his family was among the first from Myanmar to be resettled in Oklahoma City. Bawi is now a homeowner who works as an electrician. He helps Catholic Charities of Oklahoma City translate and welcome refugees from Myanmar to his new home.26

Local affiliates and offices of Voluntary Agencies in Oklahoma:
- USCCB, Catholic Charities, Tulsa and Oklahoma City

26 http://catholiccharitiesok.org/assets/files/Publicity%20Refugee%20Program%2011-7-10[1].pdf
Since 1975, tens of thousands of refugees have resettled in Oregon. In FY 2011, 762 refugees were resettled, with the most common refugee groups arriving in Oregon from Burma, Iraq, Somalia, Bhutan, and the former Soviet Union. The majority of refugees in Oregon are initially settled in the Portland Metro area (Multnomah, Clackamas, and Washington counties).

Refugee Case Services Project (RCSP):
RCSP is a Public/Private Partnership between Oregon’s Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Voluntary agencies (Volags), which are contracted through the federal Department of State. DHS provides health, food and assistance benefits to eligible refugees for up to eight months after they are settled in Oregon, and the Volags provide direct resettlement services.

Refugee Self-Sufficiency Services Programs:
Oregon’s Department of Human Services (DHS) contracts with Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization (IRCO) to provide the following services to refugees in the greater Portland Metro area:

Within the first 12 months of arrival in the U.S.:
- **New Arrival Employment Services (NAES)** - Provides employment assistance to help newly arrived refugees achieve self-sufficiency within twelve months of arrival.
- **Pre-Employment Training (PET)** - Provides classroom English language instruction for newly arrived refugees in the areas of work search skills, job application and interview skills, and appropriate on-the-job behavior. This project helps refugees understand the dynamics of the American work place, function more effectively on the job, and improves their potential for job retention.
- **Coordinated Assistance to Support Employment (CASE)** - Provides support services to newly arrived refugees who are in the NAES project.

After the first 12 months in the U.S.:
- **Established Employment Services (EES)** - Provides employment assistance for refugees who have been in the U.S. from 13 to 60 months to help them achieve and maintain self-sufficiency.
- **Refugee Vocational Training (RVT)** - Provides short term child care and nursing vocational training to help refugees who have resided in the U.S. for less than 61 months.

Refugee Success Story:
When Romeo Diahn was twelve years old, he and his family had fled from Liberia and were living in a refugee camp in Ghana. He is now twenty-two years old, and after having been resettled in Portland, OR he is about to graduate from college. His dream however is to be a singer and in February 2012 he came one step closer to reaching that goal when he was among forty-five people selected to “go to Hollywood” at the Portland, OR auditions for American Idol. Romeo has been singing since he was seven and writing music since he was eighteen. He cites President Barack Obama as his hero.

Local Affiliates and offices of Voluntary Agencies in Oregon:
- USCCB, Catholic Charities, Portland
- LIRS, Lutheran Community Services Northwest, Portland
- CWS, Sponsors Organized to Assist Refugees (SOAR), Portland
- Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization (IRCO), Portland

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history. There are also facilities that specialize in assisting refugees that were victims of torture, such as the Torture Treatment Center of Oregon in Portland.

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The US Resettlement Program in Pennsylvania

Refugee Population of Pennsylvania:
Since FY 2001, over 20,000 refugees were resettled in Pennsylvania. Refugees resettled in Pennsylvania come from 47 different countries, but, currently, most are from Bhutan, Burma and Iraq. In FY 2000, Pennsylvania resettled 2,602 refugees. At that time, most of the refugees were from the Former Soviet Union (26%), Yugoslavia (26%) and Liberia (21%). Of the 100,000 that have been settled since the mid 70’s, approximately 30% live in Philadelphia County, 25% live in Lancaster/Harrisburg, and 25% live in Erie.

Services Available to Refugees in Pennsylvania:
The PA Refugee Resettlement Program (RRP) offers a wide range of programs aimed at promoting family self-sufficiency, greater access to mainstream services, and fuller participation in local community life; it is federally funded. RRP, which is overseen by the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, provides a continuum of employment, educational, case management, health and financial support services to newly arrived refugees in the Commonwealth. Cash and Medical Assistance programs, administered by the Office of Income Maintenance, are coordinated with the delivery of employment, educational, aging and allied human services, administered by the Bureau of Employment and Training Programs in the Office of Income Maintenance. Some of the other programs that refugees qualify for include: English Language Training, Targeted Assistance Programs (Formula and Discretionary), citizenship preparation courses, Preventative Health and Unaccompanied Refugee Minors.

Refugee Success Story:
San Kyi came to Pittsburgh in September 2007. He was forced to flee Burma a few years earlier, leaving behind his wife and son, after he was tipped off that authorities had discovered an underground newspaper in his vehicle. It was a paper that he and his friends had started in protest of the military government, which was using force to subdue pro-democracy activists like Kyi. He had witnessed many killings over the years, and fearing his own death or imprisonment, he left for Malaysia. There, he was jailed for protesting in front of the Burmese embassy. Upon his release 20 months later, the United Nations granted him refugee status. Catholic Charities’ Refugee Services program helped to resettle Kyi and moved him into an apartment in Troy Hill. Since Kyi knew some English, the staff was able to find work for him immediately at a Strip District sausage business and then he later became employed at Breadworks on the North Side, where he is currently working in the machine maintenance department. His knowledge of English and the primary Burmese dialects paved the way for Breadworks to hire 16 additional refugees. Kyi notes that he is eager to help his fellow Burmese succeed on the job because “so many individuals in Pittsburgh went out of their way to help me.” Kyi’s relationship with one of Breadworks owners, David Thomas and his church, Discovery Church in Cranberry, has helped him to flourish. Discovery and two other Pittsburgh area churches established a church for the Burmese refugee community in Troy Hill and provide ongoing support, mentoring and resources for the Burmese. His hope for the future includes becoming a citizen and being reunited with his wife and son.

Local affiliates and offices of Voluntary Agencies in Pennsylvania:

- USCCB, Catholic Social Agency, Allentown
- USCRI, International Institute of Erie, Erie
- USCCB, Catholic Charities, Erie
- USCBB, Catholic Charities, Harrisburg
- CWS/IRP, Lancaster, State College
- HIAS, HIAS and Council Migration Service, Philadelphia
- USCRI, Nationalities Service Center, Philadelphia
- HIAS, Jewish Family and Children's Service, Pittsburgh
- LIRS, Lutheran Children and Family Service of E. Pennsylvania, Lancaster
- USCCB, Catholic Charities, Pittsburgh
- USCCB, Catholic Social Services, Scranton

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOS) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history.

Refugee Population of Rhode Island:
Rhode Island resettled 8,358 refugees between 1983 and 2011, with 157 refugees arriving in FY 2011. Most of these refugees are from the former USSR, Liberia, Laos and Cambodia and 90% of these refugees were primarily resettled in the Providence area. More recently, the refugees resettled in Rhode Island have arrived from Bhutan and Burma.

Services Available to Refugees:
Refugee services in Rhode Island are administered by the state. The Rhode Island Department of Health (HEALTH) initiated a Refugee Health Program in November of 2003. The Refugee Health Program works to ensure that refugees and asylees enter into a comprehensive system of care that adequately responds to their unique health care needs. The Refugee Health Program works to improve coordination of care among service providers, education and training for medical providers, and surveillance and epidemiology for future planning and reports. In 2010, 90% of refugee children were screened for dental services within two months of arrival and the Refugee Health Program assisted 178 refugee adults with the medical screening requirements for the adjustment of status process.

Refugee Success Story:
Joe Teaway is a Liberian refugee, resettled in Rhode Island after fleeing the civil war that erupted in the African nation in 1992. While he and his wife survived in filthy refugee camps in neighboring African countries, he used his language and construction skills whenever he could, teaching young refugees how to build things to help them forget their trauma. With the help of the International Institute of Rhode Island, within weeks of settling in the state Joe was building houses for a local developer. The stress-induced hypertension that nearly killed him and his wife, Kebbeh, disappeared. His oldest son, Joe Jr., received a full scholarship to Rhode Island College, and then transferred to the pre-med program at Brown University.29

Local Affiliates and Offices of Voluntary Agencies in Rhode Island:
• USCRI, International Institute of Rhode Island in Providence, RI: Serves 90% of refugees in Rhode Island and serves over 450 refugees each year from troubled regions all over the world.
• USCCB, Immigration & Refugee Services, Catholic Diocese of Rhode Island in Providence, RI.

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history.

29 http://www.iiri.org/eNews/eNews.dec.05/holidayinspiration.htm
The US Resettlement Program in South Carolina

Refugee Population in South Carolina:
South Carolina has resettled over 1,200 refugees since 2001. Most recently, the majority of refugees have resettled from Burma, Iraq, Eritrea, and Bhutan. Since 2007, South Carolina has annually resettled over 100 refugees. In FY 2011, South Carolina received 142 refugees.

Services Available for Refugees:
The South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) has been designated by the Governor as the State agency responsible for administration of the Refugee Resettlement Program (RRP). DSS established the Refugee Resettlement Program to help newly arriving populations of refugees become self-sufficient in the shortest time-frame following their arrival in the United States. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), provides funds, policy and oversight; but services are administered by the State through contractual agreements. The primary focus of RRP is to provide assistance and services through State-administered programs that enable refugees to become employed and economically self-sufficient as soon as possible. These services include: an initial health screening for all new arrivals; cash assistance and medical assistance for up to eight months after arrival in the United States, job preparation training, vocational skills training, English Language Training, translation, interpreter services and citizenship preparation.

Refugee Success Story:
Hamido Mohamed is a refugee from Kenya, who resettled with his family in Columbia, South Carolina seven years ago after fleeing the violence, drought, and famine afflicting the horn of Africa. His three children illustrate some of the successes of the re-settlement program. Here only since 2005, all three speak excellent English. "It wasn’t easy learning the language, but then we take English as a second language where they teach you the language and the reading of it," said daughter Khadija Awes. "This is how we learned it."

"It was pretty cool when we were first learning about it and stuff, because at first we didn't know anything about the United States or South Carolina," said daughter Ikra Mohamed. And like his older sisters, 11-year-old Mohamud wants to be a doctor and return to Kenya to help their country, “because some of them are dying of hunger and they aren't feeling that good, and I could help them end diseases," he says.30

Local affiliates and offices of Voluntary Agencies in South Carolina:
- LIRS, Lutheran Family Services in the Carolinas, Columbia: serves refugees throughout South Carolina and parts of North Carolina.
- USCRI, Dillon

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOS) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history.

30 http://www.wistv.com/story/16107596/years-after-emigrating-to-sc-somali-refugees-are-thriving
Refugee Population in South Dakota:
South Dakota has received over 3,400 refugees since 2001. In FY 2011, the state resettled 490 refugees. Refugees arrive in South Dakota from many areas of the world, forced to flee their native lands because of the persecution they have endured on account of their beliefs, opinions or ethnic heritage. Most refugees are resettled in Sioux Falls, a city with residents who speak over 125 dialects and languages from over 95 different countries. Approximately 75% of the refugees resettled in 2008 were from Burundi, Iraq, Bhutan, and Somalia; most of the refugees resettled today are from Iraq, Bhutan, and Burma. Other resettled refugees come from Liberia, Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, and the former Soviet Union.

Services Available for Refugees in South Dakota:
Lutheran Social Services of South Dakota is now the primary resettlement agency of the state in what is known as a Wilson/Fish Program, or an alternative to state-run refugee assistance programs. Lutheran Social Services has served over 21,483 refugees in FY 2010. Their services include those like case management, English language training, and immigration and interpreter services. The families they serve have faced tremendous hardships. They hang onto the hope of finding a safe home.

Refugee Success Story:
In 1987, an estimated 30,000 unaccompanied children fled religious and racial persecution during the civil war between Northern and Southern Sudan. Two of the boys, who fled, Malek and Ajak, arrived in Sioux Falls in 2001. They are part of what has become known as "The Lost Boys," children who were orphaned by the warfare in Sudan. Malek was only six when he fled from his village with his cousins. Ajak was five when he fled and took his two-year-old cousin with him. It took Malek and Ajak exactly a month and a half to get to an Ethiopian refugee camp. As they traveled hundreds of miles on foot, the boys felt great fear and uncertainty. Escaping children suffered the loss of their family, starvation, drowning, attacks by wild animals, harsh weather and harm from soldiers. LSS helped Malek and Ajak resettle in the United States. Malek sees a land of opportunity. He is interested in studying medicine, economics, sociology and agriculture. Ajak is interested in pursuing the seminary. He brought religious books, the Bible, and songbooks from his native Dinka tribe. The church is one similarity Ajak has seen between American and Sudanese societies. Both boys are very happy to have found a safe haven in South Dakota. They feel very lucky to have an opportunity to practice their faith and to learn. However, they are solemn when they think of so many others who were killed in the war. They also worry about those who remain in Southern Sudan and continue to endure great suffering because of their race and religion.

Local affiliates and offices of Voluntary Agencies in South Dakota:

- Lutheran Social Services of South Dakota in Sioux Falls (Minnehaha and Lincoln County) and Huron. LSS provides other necessary services through government and community funding. These services include: Reception and Placement Services, Match Grant Program, Interim Cash Assistance, Community Orientation classes, Case Management Services, Employment Services, English Language Training (ELT) Classes, Community Interpreter Services, and Immigration Services.

In addition to this agency, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community's cultural identity and history.

http://www.lsssd.org/family_services/refugee/who.html/title/a-client-s-story
Refugee Population of Tennessee:
Tennessee has resettled 10,425 refugees since 2001. In FY 2011, Tennessee resettled 1,236 refugees. The majority of refugees currently resettling in Tennessee are Iraqi, Bhutanese, Burmese, Somali, and Cuban. In 2010, Tennessee became a Wilson-Fish state, which means that a private non-profit manages the state’s refugee resettlement program and all Office of Refugee Resettlement funding for that purpose, rather than the State. The Tennessee Office of Refugees (TOR), a department under Catholic Charities of Tennessee, is the office that administers the program for the state; TOR provides sub-grants to partner agencies across Tennessee to run refugee programs at the local level. TOR also monitors the local programs and administers Tennessee’s refugee cash and medical assistance programs.

Services Offered Refugees in Tennessee:
The Wilson-Fish program in Tennessee is administered by Catholic Charities of Tennessee, and emphasizes economic self-sufficiency through early employment. Eligible clients receive Refugee Medical Assistance, Refugee Cash Assistance, an initial medical screening, employment services, acculturation case management, and English language training. TOR also administers the School Impact Program, which provides orientations on the school system to refugee children and their parents, training to teachers on refugees and their background, afterschool and summer programming to assist refugee students in academic success, and case management services to refugee children who are struggling in school. Tennessee also offers the Preventive Health program to its refugees; this program provides an orientation to the health care system in Tennessee as well as information on nutrition and mental health services. The Preventive Health Program also provides medical case management to eligible clients. Finally, the Targeted Assistance Program, an employment program for hard-to-serve clients, provides specialized job readiness and placement services to refugees seeking employment. Refugees, asylees, Cuban/Haitian entrants, Amerasians, SIVs, and victims of human trafficking are generally eligible for these programs.

Refugee Success Story:
Al Mamourey is from Iraq, and has a Ph.D. in Engineering. He helped American contractors rebuild the war torn country after the fall of Saddam Hussein. He specifically focused on building a new sewage system for his community. However, when al-Qaeda saw him working with Americans, they labeled him as a traitor. After receiving many death threats, he and his family fled to the United States, and were resettled in Nashville near his brother. He has since obtained another Bachelors degree from Tennessee State University, and is now working towards a Master’s. He has also become a part of the Refugee Congress in Washington D.C., where he advocates for the rights of other refugees in the United States. 32

Local Affiliates and Offices of Voluntary Agencies in Tennessee:
- USCCB, Catholic Charities, Nashville, Memphis
- CWS/EMM, Bridge Refugee Services, Knoxville/Chattanooga
- WR, World Relief, Nashville
- ECDC, Nashville International Center for Empowerment, Nashville

In addition to these agencies, several ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history.

32 http://cctenn.org/sites/default/files/Iraqi%20Man%20To%20Represent%20Tenn.%20At%20Refugee%20Congress%2720-%20NewsChannel5%202.pdf
Refugee Population of Texas:
Texas has one of the largest refugee resettlement programs in the United States. Texas has received 48,690 refugees since 2001. In FY 2011, 5,631 were resettled in Texas, 10 percent of all the refugees in the United States for that year. The largest refugee groups are from Bhutan and Burma.

Services Available to Refugees in Texas:
The Health and Human Services Commission of Texas offers services for refugees which are administered through public and private partnerships. Refugees have access to Refugee Medical Assistance and Refugee Cash Assistance for the first 8 months. Refugees may also access state Medicaid, SNAP and TANF programs. In addition to these services Texas administers 83 contracts in 13 cities for employment, education and case management services. Additional discretionary grants including Targeted Discretionary Grant Program, Unaccompanied Minor Program, Older Refugee programs, Refugee School Impact programs and the Haitian/Cuban Grant Program provide cash, medical assistance, interpretation and translation services, job training, English language training, education and cultural orientation services and case management services.

Refugee Health Program:
The purpose of the Texas Department of Community Health Refugee Health Program is to promote the physical, mental, and social well-being of all newly arriving refugees in the state of Texas. The program ensures that refugees receive adequate healthcare, which is not provided in their native country. Screening refugees within 90 days of their arrival aids in the reduction of contracting contagious diseases and/or spreading any diseases to the indigenous community in which the refugee resides. In correlation, outreach services provide health education to the refugee community, further ensuring prevention of infirmity.

Refugee Success Story:
Naw was living in Burma, and had to flee due to violence. He lived in the refugee camps, where he met his wife. Eventually, they were resettled in the United States, and have relocated to Nacogdoches, Texas, a small town that has a large Burmese refugee population. Here, they were given jobs in a chicken processing plant. Naw has been promoted to a supervisor of 72 workers in the plant. Any time Naw’s family has needed help, local residents have stepped in, thankful for the work he has done in their community. He dreams that his baby boy will become governor and bring peace to his country, but right now he is happy he has found somewhere safe to live that has given him good employment.*

Local affiliates and offices of Voluntary Agencies in Texas:
- IRC, International Rescue Committee, Abilene
- CWS/LIRS, Refugee Services of Texas, Inc., Amarillo
- USCCB, Catholic Family Services, Amarillo
- CWS/EMM, Refugee Services of Texas, Inc., Austin
- USCCB, Caritas of Austin, Austin
- USCCB, Catholic Social Services, Corpus Christi
- HIAS, Jewish Family Service, Dallas
- USCCB, Diocesan Migrant and Refugee Services, El Paso
- CWS/EMM/LIRS, Refugee Services of Texas, Inc. (Main office), Dallas
- IRC, International Rescue Committee, Dallas
- CWS/LIRS, Refugee Services of Texas, Inc., Fort Worth
- USCCB, Immigration and Refugee Services, Fort Worth
- WR, World Relief Fort Worth, Fort Worth
- USCRI, YMCA International Services, Houston
- LIRS, Refugee Services of Texas, Houston
- USCCB, Catholic Charities, Houston
- USCCB, Refugee and Empowerment Services, Dallas
- ECDC, Alliance for Multicultural Community Services, Houston
- CWS/EMM, Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston, Houston
- USCCB, Catholic Charities, San Antonio

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history. There are also facilities that specialize in assisting refugees that were victims of torture, such as the Center for Survivors of Torture and Trauma in Dallas, Fort Worth, Austin, San Antonio and Abilene.

* http://www.npr.org/2012/01/24/145708404/texas-town-embraces-new-refugee-residents
The US Resettlement Program in Utah

Refugee Population of Utah:
Utah has resettled over 8,800 refugees since FY 2001. Currently, the majority of these refugees are from Bhutan, Burma, Somalia, and Iraq. In FY 2011, Utah received 842 refugees.

Services Available to Refugees:
The Refugee Services Office within the Utah Department of Workforce Services provides leadership in service coordination, policy review, accountability, advocacy and resource development, and management for essential services to refugees in the State of Utah. The mission of the Utah Refugee Services Office is to maximize the quality and pace of refugee integration, coordinate all services for refugees and manage Federal funding. Services available to refugees are also provided by the International Rescue Committee in Salt Lake City, which makes sure every newly arrived refugee receives, among other things: a furnished home, help with rent, health care, English language classes, education for their children, and legal services toward residency and citizenship. Catholic Community Services also provides a helping hand to refugees resettling in Utah, aiding new residents with housing, jobs, ESL, and other special services to help them establish new lives in the United States.

Refugee Success Story:
Adalberto Diaz is a refugee from Cuba who resettled in the United States in 2000, escaping the Communist country after being labeled a criminal for the offense of running a private bakery, which is illegal. Once the Cuban military police discovered his private enterprise, the only way to ensure his safety was to escape. His journey as a political refugee took him to Salt Lake City, where he has been able to build upon his passion for cooking and baking, which was instilled in him as a young boy in Cuba helping his grandmothers and mother prepare food for the family. Since 2000, Diaz has made a name for himself in Utah’s food industry, working in many of the state’s top restaurants, hosting cooking segments on television, and instructing aspiring chefs at Utah Valley University’s Culinary Arts Institute. "I really enjoy sharing my recipes with so many people," Diaz says. "I spend a lot of time working in the kitchen, practicing and coming up with recipes."

Local Affiliates and Offices of Voluntary Agencies in Utah:
- USCCB, Catholic Community Services, Diocese of Salt Lake City
- IRC, International Rescue Committee, Salt Lake City

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history. There are also facilities that specialize in assisting refugees that were victims of torture, such as the Asian Association of Utah and the Utah Health and Human Rights Project, both in Salt Lake City.

The US Resettlement Program in Vermont

Refugee Population of Vermont:
Since 2001, Vermont has received over 2,500 refugees, predominately from Bhutan, Burma, and Somalia. Refugees arrive in Vermont from many areas of the world, forced to flee their native lands because of the persecution they have endured on account of their beliefs, opinions or ethnic heritage. In FY 2011 Vermont received 361 refugees. The majority of these refugees were resettled from Bhutan and Burma. It is estimated that nearly the entire population lives in the greater Burlington area.

Services Available for Refugees in Vermont:
Resettlement cases in Vermont are handled by the Vermont Refugee Resettlement Program, a field office of the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, located in the greater Burlington area. This resettlement agency, operating under what is known as a Wilson-Fish site, works intensively with the incoming refugees and aims for self-sufficiency within 8 months of arrival. In addition to this, refugees are given 5 years of English language training. VRRP’s employee-employer services act as both a trainer and a placement service, taking on the function of matching the refugee’s skill sets with the employer’s needs. As in other parts of the country, the recession has impacted the availability of jobs for new arrivals but the unemployment rate in the Burlington area is about half the national average, allowing this to continue to be a very good resettlement site. All refugees eligible for TANF are enrolled in the state of Vermont’s very successful Reach Up program, which helps refugees achieve self-sufficiency through a network of comprehensive services. Vermont’s Department of Health facilitates the healthy transition of newly arriving refugees by providing a coordinated approach to health care services and has one of the best records in the nation of providing Domestic Health Assessments within the first 30 days of arrival.

Torture Treatment in Vermont:
New England Survivors of Torture and Trauma: Vermont Immigration and Asylum Advocates and Connecting Cultures, the Behavior, Therapy and Psychotherapy Center, University of Vermont offer legal and mental health services in a holistic way to survivors to torture.

Refugee Success Story:
The African country of Somalia has been in turmoil for over thirty years with famine, civil war/conflict, and fear of persecution. Norre Bulle was a toddler when his family fled to a refugee camp in Kenya, and he spent his childhood growing up in camps until he was fourteen. Norre and his family members were one of the luckiest families that had escaped and reached one of the neighboring countries safely, because many people died on the road for many reasons just trying to escape the violence. Some people died of starvation or thirst. Some were eaten by wild animals (hyena, leopards or lions). Some were too weak to take the long walk and others died while trying to help others. Norre has experienced some excruciating events that are painful to recount and talk about, including almost witnessing his mother get raped by a group of bandits. His family was resettled in the greater Burlington area in 2004. Since then, he has learned English, graduated from high school and college (Johnson State College, Class of 2011), and had just written a memoir about his life, currently waiting for a publisher. Norre also loves playing soccer and played in college as a star player and high school. Without the help of organizations and individuals, Norre would not be where he is today, and he is very appreciative of the good life he has in the United States, knowing that not everyone is as lucky as he is to have left Somalia.

Local affiliates and offices of Voluntary Agencies in Vermont:
USCRI, Vermont Refugee Resettlement Program, Colchester, the only resettlement agency in VT, resettles refugees in Chittenden County.

In addition to this agency, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history.

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34 http://www.vpr.net/news_detail/93198/memoir-traces-life-from-somalia-to-us/
Refugee Population of Virginia:
Since the year 2001, Virginia has resettled 14,689 refugees. In FY 2011, Virginia resettled 1,339 refugees. Virginia's refugee population has most recently come from East Africa, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia. Approximately fifty-five percent of Virginia’s refugees relocate in the Northern Virginia area. Populations that are eligible for refugee services include refugees, Amerasians, asylees, Cuban/Haitian entrants, special immigrant visa holders (SIVs), unaccompanied refugee minors, and victims of human trafficking.

The Virginia Refugee Resettlement Program (RRP) is comprised of many program partners at the federal, state, county, and community level. The RRP in Virginia is federally funded by the Office of Refugee Resettlement and is state-administered by the Virginia Department of Social Services, Office of Newcomer Services (ONS). ONS is responsible for coordinating, planning, and implementing and evaluating Virginia's refugee program. Services and programs provided by the Refugee Resettlement Program include: health screenings, social and support services, including employment assistance and English language training, and financial and medical assistance.

Services for Torture Survivors:
Refugee communities are often highly traumatized and frequently include a significant percentage of individuals who have endured torture. To respond to the specialized needs of these torture survivors as well as their counterparts in the asylee community, the Program for Survivors of Torture and Severe Trauma provides a range of mental health, medical, social and cultural services to help rehabilitate these individuals so that they can lead full and productive lives and make use of the other services offered to refugees. The Program for Survivors of Torture and Severe Trauma operates as a division of Northern Virginia Family Service, and offers a broad range of mental health, social, educational, health and language services geared to the unique values and characteristics of individuals and families from diverse cultures.

Refugee Success Story:
In 1981 Ty and Bich Truong left Vietnam on a raft and after seven days at sea they arrived at a refugee camp in Indonesia. They were eventually resettled in Harrisonburg, VA where they have resided for 30 years. Initially Ty took a job as a construction worker but after working hard to improve his English he was able to spend fourteen years at RR Donnelly. By 1994 Ty and Bich had saved enough money to open up their own restaurant, the Saigon Café. They owned and ran the restaurant successfully until October 2011 when they finally decided to close so that they could enjoy retirement with their children and grandchildren.35

Local affiliates and offices of Voluntary Agencies in Virginia:
- IRC, The International Rescue Committee, Charlottesville
- USCCB, Catholic Charities of South County
- LIRS, Lutheran Social Services, Falls Church
- USCCB, Catholic Diocese of Richmond
- USCCB, Catholic Diocese of Hampton
- ECDC, African Community Center, Arlington
- CW/S/EMM, Virginia Council of Churches, Harrisonburg, Newport News, Richmond
- USCCB Catholic Diocese of Arlington, Arlington
- USCCB, Catholic Charities of Alexandria
- USCCB, Catholic Charities of Chantilly
- USCCB, Catholic Charities of Falls Church
- USCCB, Catholic Charities of Fredericksburg
- Northern Virginia Family Services, Falls Church
- USCCB, Catholic Diocese of Roanoke, Refugee and Immigration Services

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history. There are also facilities that specialize in assisting refugees that were victims of torture, such as Northern Virginia Family in Falls Church.

The US Resettlement Program in Washington

Refugee Population in Washington:
Washington has resettled 30,173 refugees since 2001. In FY 2011, Washington State resettled 2,135 refugees, 3.8% of the refugees that have come to the United States. Refugees come from around the world, including Bhutan, Burma, Iraq, and Somalia, and are resettled throughout the state. Historically, Washington has had one of the most welcoming policies towards refugees.

Services Available to Refugees:
Refugee services are administered by Washington State. Washington manages a Refugee Cash Assistance and Refugee Medical Assistance program for refugee adults without children who have lived in the US for less than 8 months and have little to no income. There is also a Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, which is available to low-income refugee families with minor children. Employment and training services, English as a second language classes, and job search assistance is provided to all refugees who have resided in the US for less than five years and to refugees who receive TANF. Refugees, asylees, Cuban/Haitian entrants, Amerasians, special immigrant visa holders from Iraq and Afghanistan, and victims of human trafficking are eligible for these programs.

Refugee Success Story:
Nandu is Bhutanese Nepali, and had to flee from his home in Bhutan during the cultural purge of all Nepali people in 1991. He lived for 17 years in a crowded Nepali refugee camp with no electricity or clean water, and finally resettled in Seattle in 2008. He and his large family found Seattle overwhelming at first, but have begun to settle in. Nandu is taking English classes, and works as a courtesy clerk in a Des Moines Safeway. In Bhutan, he was a public school teacher, and he hopes to find a way to be able to teach again in the United States. His son is the best of his family at English, and works at a deli in the SeaTac Airport. They have found a Bhutanese community where they have friends who speak Nepali and English who have been eager to help them.  

Local Affiliates and Volunteer Offices in Washington:
- USCCB, Catholic Charities, Spokane
- USCCB, Catholic Community Services, Refugee Assistance Program, Archdiocesan Housing Authority, Seattle, Tacoma
- International Rescue Committee (IRC), Seattle
- LIRS, Lutheran Community Services Northwest, Seattle, Vancouver
- World Relief, Richland, Seattle, Kent, Spokane
- HIAS, Jewish Family Services, Seattle, Bellevue, Kent
- EMM, Diocese of Olympia, Seattle

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history.

http://kuow.org/program.php?id=25629
Refugee Population of Wisconsin

Over 70,000 refugees and former refugees live in Wisconsin; a majority, about 55,000, are Hmong from Laos in Southeast Asia, but refugees have come to Wisconsin from all over the world. Other populations include refugees from Vietnam, Cambodia, the former Soviet Union and former Yugoslavia. The majority of new refugees come from Somalia, former Burma (Karen and Chin) and Bhutan (next to Nepal, China and India). From the 1980s through the early 2000s, the Hmong refugees spread throughout the major urban areas in Wisconsin, but today, most new refugees are building new lives in the greater Milwaukee metropolitan region.

Wisconsin Refugee Program:

The Refugee Assistance Services Program Section, on behalf of the State of Wisconsin, manages and monitors contracts for programs designed to assist refugees achieve economic self-sufficiency and social self-reliance. All of these programs are funded through the US Department of Health and Human Services’ Office of Refugee Resettlement. Direct services are provided by partner agencies and include employment and supportive services (such as health screenings, English as a Second Language instruction, family-focused case management). There are five resettlement agencies in Wisconsin.

Services Available to Refugees in Wisconsin:

Families with children under age 18 are generally eligible for support under Wisconsin Works (W-2). Refugees who are aged, blind or disabled may receive assistance from the federally administered Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program or Medicaid. Refugees who meet the income and resource eligibility standards of the W-2 or Medicaid programs, but are not otherwise eligible—such as single individuals, childless couples, teen parents and two-parent families with no children under 18 years of age—may receive benefits under the special Refugee Cash Assistance and Refugee Medical Assistance programs.

Refugee Success Story:

Mai Ya Xiong is a Laotian refugee of Hmong descent, resettled with her family in Wisconsin when she was a young child. She spoke no English and had never experienced the cold or seen snow before. She has since graduated high school and college and has done continuous work to help make the transition to life in the United States smoother than her own was. She started a Girl Scout troop for middle school Hmong girls, and was involved in the Hmong American and Asian American Student Unions in at University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Perhaps most importantly she has written a children’s book about her family’s life in Laos, aiding the U.S. soldiers during the Vietnam War, their time in the refugee camp, and their transition to their new lives in America. She hopes it will help show other immigrants that they are not alone in their struggles to fit in here.

Local affiliates and offices of Voluntary Agencies in Wisconsin:

- USCCB, Catholic Charities, Green Bay
- USCCB, Catholic Charities, Milwaukee
- USCRI, International Institute of Wisconsin, Milwaukee
- LIRS, Lutheran Social Services of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan, Milwaukee and Wausau
- HIAS, Jewish Family Services, Milwaukee
- ECDC, Pan-African Community Association, Milwaukee

In addition to these agencies, many ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs) exist throughout the state to help various refugee communities integrate and succeed in their new homes. These organizations are run by refugees, for refugees to provide a variety of direct services, increase civic participation, and preserve the community’s cultural identity and history.