



Welcome, Convene, Educate, Advocate

Hearts & Homes for Refugees Hearts & Homes for Refugees is a non-profit, volunteer-driven, refugee-serving organization in Westchester County. We partner with U.S. State Department-designated agencies to resettle and create safe and inclusive communities for those fleeing violence and persecution. Hearts & Homes educates, equips and inspires all people of goodwill to come together—families, neighbors, community organizations, faith and civic groups—to assist and advocate for our new neighbors.

OUR VISION

We envision a country that offers tolerance, respect and refuge for those who have been forced to flee their homes, starting in our own backyard of Westchester County, NY.

OUR GOALS

- Resettle refugees in our communities through the [Community Sponsorship model](#).
- Facilitate more welcoming by sharing our collective knowledge, best practices, resources.
- Create opportunities for volunteers to engage in refugee supporting activities.
- Raise awareness about the plight of refugees.
- Advocate for their continued acceptance and protection.
- Expand the network with new partners and supporters.
- Equip communities elsewhere to *replicate this model of community building and adopt the refugee resettlement community sponsorship model*.

HOW DO WE ACCOMPLISH THIS?

Promote Refugee Resettlement and the [Community sponsorship model](#).

Volunteers from Hearts & Homes for Refugees resettled the first refugee family in Westchester County in 2016. Since then, twelve more community sponsors have welcomed nearly 100 refugees. Our programs of refugee assistance, community outreach, education and engagement often pave the way for volunteers who step up to make the more significant commitment as resettlement sponsors.

[The Westchester Refugee Initiative](#) - A Dynamic Network for Collaboration and Growth

Bringing together and growing a diverse coalition makes us a stronger force for welcoming refugees.

Hearts & Homes for Refugees created the Westchester Refugee Initiative (WRI) in 2018, to convene people of goodwill, educate, mobilize support and advocate for refugees here in Westchester County, NY because we believe our voices are louder and actions stronger when we work together to support refugees in their integration as new Americans.

The WRI member network consists of more than 40 groups and 2,000 volunteers. Together we have welcomed nearly 100 refugees upon arrival, assisted 500 already resettled neighbors, and advocated for refugee policies that embrace our core American values of welcoming. Making this possible are people from faith and interfaith groups, local civic and community organizations, educational institutions, other non-profit organizations, high school and college students, as well as committed families, neighbors and individuals, in partnership with the resettlement agencies Catholic Charities and HIAS.

Please [click here](#) for an INFOGRAPHIC of WRI Members & Partners.

The WRI facilitates collaboration among partners. Together, we uplift and amplify one another's welcoming work. In its leadership of WRI, Hearts & Homes contributes resources to share information and best practices, hosts events, helps network leaders and volunteers stay connected and informed through ongoing communications, cultivates new volunteers, and creates opportunities for volunteers and groups to support our new neighbors.

Our programs of community outreach, education and engagement plant the seeds for increased public understanding and support. We provide opportunities for volunteers to journey with us along the path from awareness to action, whether that is through advocacy or refugee assistance, from short-term support to a long-term commitment. The presence of a strong coalition and a collaborative spirit ensures that resettlement and advocacy in Westchester County can be as far-reaching, impactful and sustainable as possible. In these challenging times, community partnerships are keeping the welcoming movement alive and our core American values intact.

WRI VISION

We envision a country that offers tolerance, respect and refuge for those who have been forced to flee their homes, beginning in our own backyard of Westchester County, NY.

WRI GOALS

- Share knowledge, resources, expertise and opportunities
- Raise awareness about the global plight of refugees
- Offer programs and opportunities for a local response for volunteers to support our *new* neighbors as they strive to thrive and integrate into their communities.
- Advocate for the continued acceptance and protection of refugees
- Cultivate new volunteers to step up and resettle and support our new neighbors.

Will you join us to plan, to lead, or to offer some of your time in any way, small or large?

Contact: WRI@heartsandhomesforrefugees.org

Networking Beyond Westchester County

Our vision for Westchester County serves as an example and can inspire and guide others to become welcoming communities. Welcoming the stranger seeking refuge is a core value embraced by many Americans. Hearts & Homes for Refugees has been an active proponent of tapping into this and expanding community grassroots support of refugees across the country. We actively engage in networking outside Westchester County to inspire and share our scalable work in the belief that this is how we can shift the paradigm of refugee resettlement and welcome more refugees with stronger than ever outcomes as new Americans.

HOW DO WE SUPPORT REFUGEES?

Direct Support [Helping Hands](#) connects refugees, asylees and Special Immigration Visa holder (SIVs) with volunteers, providing short-term assistance to refugees and related populations. We also conduct **Donation Drives** to serve the needs of refugees and asylees locally. [Getting Refugee Children Ready for School](#) [2020 Winter Boot and Coat Drive](#)

Advocacy is a powerful tool in shaping policies that strengthen the US Refugee Admissions Program. We offer tools, alerts and action steps, the WRI [Advocacy Plan & Toolkit](#) promotes grassroots participation in advocating for local and national policies that support refugees. From petitions to postcard writing, the Toolkit offers guidelines and instructions on advocating for refugee resettlement in the U.S. and dignified, just immigration policy.

Awareness Raising [Staying Connected](#) and communicating across the network is a powerful way to amplify and spread the messages of welcoming. Creating and jointly participating in [Activities and Events](#) – speaking engagements, community activities – are ways to inspire, educate and motivate support for refugees. (see [Welcoming Week 2018](#).)

Education & Community Outreach programs fosters cross-cultural understanding and welcoming attitudes. Talking about our work and sharing opportunities to get involved in welcoming inspires others and often translates into commitments from volunteers, donors and community partners.

Ambassadors Those who have been strong advocates of refugee resettlement and the welcoming movement are invited to become [Ambassadors](#) to help spread the word about refugees and resettlement and WRI. Listen here to WRI's first refugee/SIV Ambassador on [The Alien Chronicles](#) podcast.

Asylum Guidance Refugees who are granted asylum can sign up for many of the same services as those refugees we have been assisting in traditional resettlement. Many of those individuals and families are not aware themselves, and Hearts & Homes is partnering with Catholic Charities to spread the word about the services to which they are legally entitled. Find out ways you can help get out the word and this flyer. [Asylee Guidance Support](#)

Pandemic Support See how we have been assisting the most vulnerable among us during the pandemic. [Covid-19 Relief Impact Report.](#)

[WAYS TO GET INVOLVED](#)

[UPCOMING EVENTS](#)

[Changing Landscape in Westchester County Since 2016](#)
[2019 Impact Report](#)

[DONATE](#)

For information about participating, email: wri@heartsandhomesforrefugees.org

Hearts and Homes for Refugees is an apolitical initiative that welcomes concerned individuals from every faith-based and civic background and does not represent any specific faith or community group except its own.



bit.ly/WhatIsHHRWRI



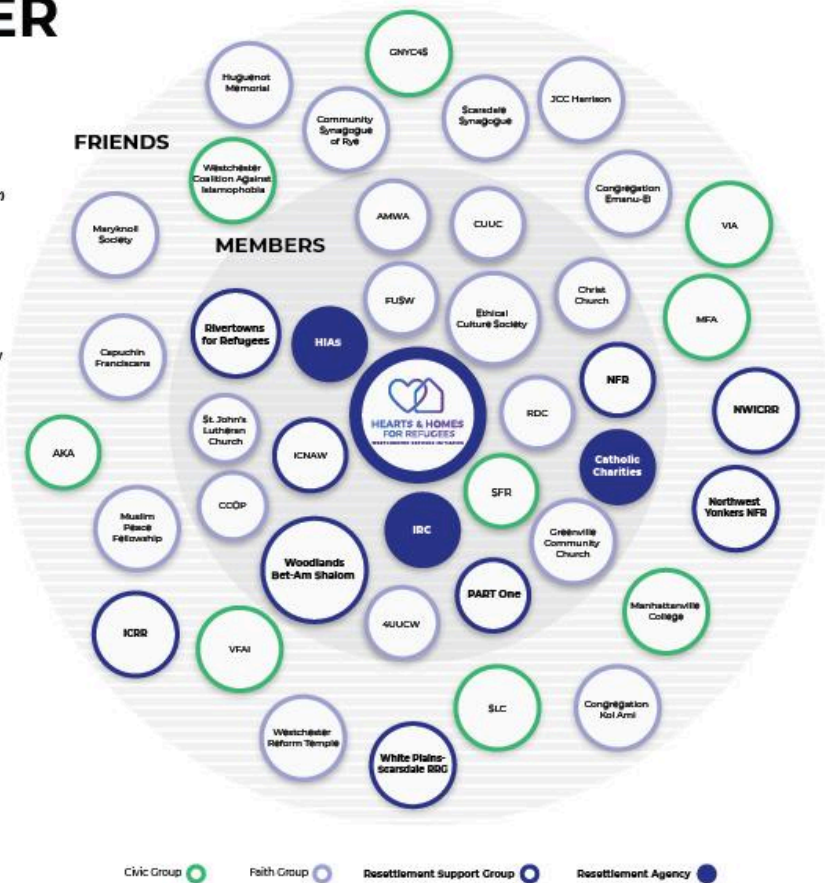
WESTCHESTER REFUGEE INITIATIVE

WRI Members

Hearts and Homes for Refugees, Pelham (founder and coordinator)
 Catholic Charities of New York
 HIAS New York → **HIAS**
 International Rescue Committee → **IRC**
 American Muslim Women's Association → **AMWA**
 Christ Church, Pelham
 Community Church of the Pelhams → **CCOP**
 Community Unitarian Universalist Congregation → **CUUC**
 Ethical Culture Society of Westchester
 First Unitarian Society of Westchester → **FUSW**
 Fourth Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Westchester → **4UUCW**
 Greenville Community Church, Scarsdale
 Interfaith Council for New Americans Westchester → **ICNAW**
 Neighbors for Refugees, Larchmont/Mamaroneck → **NFR**
 PART One (Pleasantville Armonk Resettlement Team)
 Rivertowns for Refugees
 Sisters of the Divine Compassion → **RDC**
 St. John's Lutheran Church, Mamaroneck
 Students for Refugees → **SFR**
 Woodlands-Bet Am Shalom, White Plains

WRI Friends

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. / Zeta Nu Omega chapter → **AKA**
 Capuchin Franciscans
 Community Synagogue of Rye
 Congregation Emanu-El of Westchester
 Congregation Kol Ami
 JCC Harrison
 Greater NYC Families for Syrians → **GNVC4S**
 Huguenot Memorial Church of the Pelhams
 Interfaith Committee for Refugee Resettlement → **ICRR**
 Manhattanville College
 Maryknoll Society
 Muslim Peace Fellowship
 Multifaith Alliance for Syrian Refugees → **MFA**
 Northern Westchester Interfaith
 Coalition for Refugee Resettlement → **NWICRR**
 Northwest Yonkers NFR
 Sarah Lawrence College → **SLC**
 Scarsdale Synagogue
 Venezuelans and Immigrants Aid → **VIA**
 Veterans for American Ideals → **VFAI**
 Westchester Reform Temple
 White Plains-Scarsdale Refugee Resettlement Group



To see a larger version of this graphic, please [click here](#).

WRI Members

August 2019

[Hearts & Homes for Refugees, Pelham \(coordinator and founder\)](http://www.HeartsandHomesforRefugees.org)



[Catholic Charities of New York](#)

[HIAS New York](#)

[International Rescue Committee](#)

[American Muslim Women's Association](#)

[Christ Church, Pelham](#)

[Community Church of the Pelhams](#) -- CCOP

[Community Unitarian Universalist Congregation at White Plains](#) --CUUC

[Ethical Culture Society of Westchester](#)

[First Unitarian Society of Westchester](#) -- FUSW

[Fourth Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Westchester](#), Mohegan Lake --4UUCW

[Greenville Community Church](#), Scarsdale

Inter-Faith Council of New Americans Westchester (ICNAW)

Beth El Synagogue (New Rochelle), Community Unitarian Universalist Congregation at White Plains, Ethical Cultural Society of Westchester, New Rochelle United Methodist Church, Temple Israel of New Rochelle, Temple Israel Center of White Plains

[Neighbors for Refugees](#), Larchmont/Mamaroneck -- NFR

PART One (Pleasantville Armonk Resettlement Team)

Congregation B'nai Yisrael, Pleasantville Community Synagogue

Rivertowns for Refugees

Irvington Presbyterian Church, Temple Beth Shalom, Social Action for 10591, Irvington High School, Church of St. Barnabas Irvington, Grace Episcopal Hastings, Christ Episcopal Church, Zion Episcopal Dobbs Ferry, Irvington Activists, Temple Beth Abraham, Greenburgh Hebrew Center, Sacred Heart, Reformed Church of Tarrytown, All Saints Episcopal Church Briarcliff, South Presbyterian Church, St. Matthew & Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Church of the Immaculate Conception, Christ Episcopal Church & San Marcos

[Sisters of the Divine Compassion \(RDC\)](#)

[St. John's Lutheran Church](#), Mamaroneck

[Students for Refugees](#) *Founded by Scarsdale High School, with branches in the following Westchester High Schools: Mamaroneck, Pelham, White Plains.*

[Woodlands-Bet Am Shalom](#), White Plains

WRI Friends

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. / Zeta Nu Omega chapter -- AKA

[Capuchin Franciscans](#)

[Community Synagogue of Rye](#)

[Congregation Emanu-El of Westchester](#), Rye

[Congregation Kol Ami](#), White Plains

Greater NYC Families for Syria

[Huguenot Memorial Church of the Pelhams](#)

Interfaith Committee for Refugee Resettlement - ICRR, Rye

Christ's Church, Rye Presbyterian and Rye Community Synagogue

[JCC Harrison](#)

[Manhattanville College](#), Purchase

[Maryknoll Society](#)

[Multifaith Alliance for Syrian Refugees](#) - MFA

[Muslim Peace Fellowship](#)

Northern Westchester Interfaith Coalition for Refugee Resettlement - NWICRR

Northwest Yonkers Neighbors for Refugees

[Sarah Lawrence College](#), Bronxville

Scarsdale Synagogue

[Venezuelans and Immigrants Aid \(VIA\)](#)
[Veterans for American Ideals](#)
Westchester Coalition Against Islamophobia
[Westchester Reform Temple](#), Scarsdale
White Plains-Scarsdale Refugee Resettlement Group

WRI Partners & Supporters

[The Alien Chronicles](#)
[Junior League of Pelham](#)
[Pelham Picture House](#)
[Pineapple Fund](#)
[Real New York Tours](#)
[Welcoming America](#)
[West End Collegiate Church](#)

Beyond Westchester

Amnesty International [Longer Table](#)
[Church World Service #GreaterAs1](#)
[Emma's Torch](#)
[Episcopal Migration Ministries](#)
[Fellowship of Reconciliation](#)
[Hello Neighbor](#)
[IRIS](#)
[Keeping Our Promise](#)
[Princeton University, Religion and Resettlement Project](#)
[RCUSA](#)
UNHCR [#WithRefugees](#)
[Vietnamese Boat People](#)
[Welcoming America](#)
<http://nooneleft.org/rochester/>